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An Analysis of the Role of International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Coordinator

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**An analysis of the role of
International Baccalaureate
Middle Years Programme coordinator**

John Eric Robertson

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

University of Bath

Department of Education

July 2011

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I hereby declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, contains no material previously published or written in any medium by another person, except where appropriate reference has been made.

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Abstract

International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes are increasingly prevalent, yet lack systematic study of their implementation and leadership. This enquiry analyses the role of IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) coordinator in implementing the MYP in a variety of school settings. Empirical research involved interviews with experienced coordinators and case studies of an international private, a national private, and a national public school. It focussed on school setting and its impact on coordination, curriculum implementation, key functions of coordinators, and approaches to accountability and professional development.

The research found, first, that a primary aim of MYP coordination, facilitating links between subjects and between middle and high schools, was viewed by coordinators as compelling though ambitious. Second, schools' pre-existing organizational, resource, and external accountability settings often presented coordinators, particularly in national public schools, with difficulties, primarily logistical. Third, the subject-based structure of respondents' high schools provided avenues for disciplinary implementation but also presented structural and cultural barriers to collaborative interdisciplinary planning. Fourth, coordinators typically had much responsibility with little formal authority. They sought therefore to overcome above barriers through key functions, termed 'guide alongside', 'facilitator', and 'professional developer'. These functions were effective in developing trust and credibility with teachers, fostering constructive discourse, and enlisting the authority and structural support of senior managers. Fifth, MYP's approaches to accountability and professional development were viewed as complementary and constructive. The MYP emphasized collaborative partnership with participating schools in the evolutionary development of its curriculum framework. Accordingly, coordinators demonstrated 'creative professionalism' with this nascent programme, taking leadership opportunities within their schools and for IB. This approach differs from many depictions in middle management literature, in which subject leaders struggle with conflicting, externally-imposed, responsibilities for collaborative school improvement and teacher evaluation.

Significant implications of this study include: *for middle management research*, the importance of school setting for understanding structural and cultural barriers to curriculum implementation; *for education policy*, greater consideration of 'collaborative partnership' as a means for school improvement; and *for practice*, the value of 'creative professional' development opportunities.

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Chapter One: Introduction

International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes are increasingly prevalent. The Primary Years (PYP), Middle Years (MYP), and Diploma (DP) Programmes have been adopted by schools - not only international but also national, not only private but also public - at an explosive growth rate (IBO, 2010). There is, however, little research on the implementation and leadership of these programmes. This enquiry intends to contribute to such research by analysing the role of MYP coordinator, in implementing the MYP in a variety of school settings.

I have chosen to focus on the MYP and its coordination, in particular, because I have been an MYP coordinator. This was my role in two different school settings, in Europe and North America respectively, and I found it to be challenging in both instances. The MYP is arguably the most ambitious of the three IB programmes to implement; I wish to understand more about it from the perspectives of fellow coordinators, in order to enhance my own leadership skills. I hope also that this enquiry would be of benefit to the IB organization in offering this programme worldwide, and to those schools, particularly their MYP leadership teams, struggling to make the MYP successful in their respective communities. I seek, moreover, to make an original contribution not only to the literature relating to the IB but also to the wider field of education leadership in the on-going debates over school improvement and the role, responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities of middle managers.

This enquiry is organized as follows:

- In Chapter Two, I explore relevant literature on curriculum, coordination, middle management, collaboration, and accountability.
- In Chapter Three, I provide context for this enquiry by examining origins of the IB, the MYP curricular framework, and the MYP leadership model.
- In Chapter Four, on the basis of the relevant literature and MYP context, I set out key issues and research questions, describe and analyse data collection and analysis methods.
- In Chapter Five, I describe the data collected on these key issues and research questions.

- In Chapter Six, I analyse and interpret this data and then discuss the main outcomes and implications of this enquiry.
- In Chapter Seven, I conclude this enquiry by reflecting on its process, findings, and contribution to IB and education leadership literature.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

While the role of International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) coordinator is uncommon and there is little to no research per se, there is relevant literature from other fields upon which to draw. In the subsequent literature review a number of concepts will be examined:

- I. concepts which are fundamental to the role of MYP coordinator - curriculum and coordination;
- II. the category to which MYP coordinator belongs - middle management; and
- III. key concepts which emerge from this literature review - collaboration and teams, and accountability.

I will use this review to develop a conceptual framework for my enquiry.

I. Fundamental Concepts

As the MYP is a curricular framework and the title chosen for this role is coordinator, I want to explore the denotations of these two fundamental concepts, curriculum and coordination - the former as understood in the field of education; and the latter in the field of management.

Curriculum

My examination of curriculum will include important aspects of its planning and then consider the wider political context in which it operates.

Curriculum is at the very core of what schools do. As a 'course of study', curriculum comprises the teaching, learning, and assessment of subjects. The concept, however, is often described as more than this set of formal elements. Bobbit, in the first text on this topic, *The Curriculum* (1918), presents curriculum as the course of experience that forms human beings into persons. Thus, curriculum may also include the informal programme

(e.g., extra-curricular activities), and other, less tangible features such as school ethos, relationships, values, and teaching and learning styles - to encompass the larger school experience which *"promote(s) the intellectual, personal, social, and physical development of its pupils"* (HM Inspectorate in Ross, 2000: 9).

A central element to curriculum is planning (Kelly, 1983: 10). Based on a survey of relevant literature, this undertaking involves a number of decisions, including:

- what the curriculum should contain (e.g., which subjects and with what emphasis - in terms of content, objectives, process, whether to include extra-curricular activities);
- how it should be taught (e.g., didactically, student-centred); and
- for what purpose (e.g., citizenship, preparation for university, preparation for employment).

On the macro level of curriculum planning, such decisions reflect underlying values and emphases or approaches. I will present three such major emphases: transmission, product, and process, and then examine the related issue of curriculum organization.

A curricular emphasis on transmission stems from British Empiricists' conceptions of students as empty vessels or *tabula rasa* into which the most important body of knowledge, i.e., syllabus or canon, is to be delivered (Blenkin et al., 1992: 23). Disciplinary content and rote learning are of primary importance in this approach. It was around the turn of the twentieth century, when mass public education was being institutionalized in a number of Anglophone countries, that the contemporary system of accepted secondary school subjects was established with an emphasis on specialized content (Hargreaves, 2000: 154).¹ In the 1980s Hirsch et al. (1988) and Bloom (1987) were prominent advocates for reviving the 'Western canon' in American schools in order to ensure citizens' cultural literacy.

¹ "The separate subject approach has a long tradition at the university level and was promoted in the U.S. for the elementary and high schools in the 1890s by committees of the National Education Association that made recommendations for standardizing the curriculum." (Beane, 1993) "In England and Wales, the contemporary system of accepted secondary school subjects was established and institutionalized through the 1904 Secondary Regulations that defined the academic subject base of secondary schooling (excluding more vocational 'subjects' at which working-class students were starting to excel!" (Goodson, 1988)

A curricular emphasis on product assumes that education is a technical exercise in which objectives are set, a plan is devised, then applied, and the outcomes or products are measured (Bobbitt, 1918: 42). This approach was first articulated by Bobbitt, then represented by Tyler (1949) as a rationalist response to the progressive, i.e., Deweyan, approaches of the 1920s and 1930s. The approach drew heavily upon 'scientific management' principles devised for industry by Taylor (1911), e.g., division of labour, standardized process, and measurement of outputs. A prevailing assumption, when applied to education, is that behavior can be objectively measured, and often reduced to a checklist of performance standards or competencies. Curriculum planning, therefore, is largely decontextualized from the particulars of school and classroom.

A curricular emphasis on process, in contrast, features the interaction in the classroom of each particular context. Stenhouse (1975) compares this approach to a cooking recipe: *"first imagined as a possibility, then the subject of experiment"* (p. 4) - *"a recipe can be varied according to taste"* (p. 5). This approach is often associated with progressivism, with its Deweyan roots, and usually involves an inquiry-based pedagogy which is student-centred and developmentally focussed. Its efficacy is largely dependent on the quality of teachers and how well they can create meaning in their unique classroom contexts and reflect constructively on their teaching practice (Grundy, 1987).

Another important and related aspect of curriculum involves its organizational framework in schools, and the extent to which it should be designed according to a primarily disciplinary or integrated focus.² The majority of Anglophone schools, particularly secondary schools, reflect an assumption that curriculum is best organized according to traditional disciplines or *"realms of knowledge"* (Siskin, 1994) (Bolam and Turner, 1998). Academically, a disciplinary structure is based upon established ways of understanding the world and allows for progressive mastery of closely related concepts and patterns of reasoning (Hirst and Peters, 1970); it also prepares students for a similar framework at university. This framework often emphasizes curriculum as product and transmission, allowing for standardized forms of assessment and evaluation; it also provides

² An integrated curriculum may be adopted to various extents, take various forms, thus, be described in various ways (Fogerty, 1991). 'Interdisciplinary' and 'transdisciplinary' curricula are two common examples.

manageable units for the logistics of organization, which is especially important in large schools. There are, however, alternative models: schools which have been designed for more integrated and open-ended inquiry (e.g., Coalition of Essential Schools, International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme) typically emphasizing curriculum as process. A recent trend has been that many schools operating within a subject-based framework have sought to adopt a more integrated focus, by promoting interdisciplinary connections (i.e., between subject areas) (e.g., Beane, Fogarty, and Jacobs in *Educational Leadership*, 1991). The intent is to focus upon

real-life problems and issues significant to both young people and adults, applying pertinent content and skills from many subject areas. (Vars and Beane, 2000)

A number of researchers (e.g., Lortie, 1975, Siskin, 1994, O'Neill, 1997, Hargreaves, 2003) have asserted that such cross-curricular efforts are particularly challenging, with the 'egg-crate' organization of most secondary schools acting as barriers to collaboration.

I highlight, from this examination of curriculum organization, the strong connections between emphases, their underlying aims and values, and structural realities of schools. This issue is an important consideration for understanding a programme such as MYP, with its disciplinary and interdisciplinary elements, but also its coordination. I will, therefore, examine this issue further in subsequent sections and chapters.

My review of literature certainly underscores the fact that curriculum, in its planning and organization, is very much a social and political creation, and, therefore, the potential source of much contention (Kelly, 1983). Bernstein (1971) suggests that

how a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge that it considers to be public reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control. (p. 47)

The question of who should decide curriculum - its organization, approach, contents, and assessment mechanisms – has, indeed, been an increasing source of conflict between stakeholders - government, school management, parents, and teachers - over the last few decades.

Many in the field of education and education research have made a case that a neo-liberal agenda has largely prevailed.³ I.e., in response to the rise of the market forces of globalization, a multitude of social and political institutions across the world, including the majority of Anglophone governments, particularly those in Britain and the U.S.A, has moved from the Post-WWII welfare state model of bureaucratic organization to a business-based model.⁴ Foremost, this shift has brought an externally-imposed system of accountability to education, in which means to measure progress and diagnose difficulties in a systematic, quantifiable way have been introduced (Brown et al., 1997, Leithwood, 1999, Thrupp and Willmott, 2003, Wagner, 1989). This trend became manifest in Britain with the 1988 Education Reform Act. This reform led, for example, to the creation of a central school inspection agency, Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted); an emphasis on student exam results (including standardized testing for numeracy and literacy); and the publishing of league tables comparing school performance. The United States' 2001 No Child Left Behind Act was based on the above British model and led, for example, to an increase in standardized state testing as well as the recent linking of teacher salary to student performance (Macpherson et al., 1997, Leithwood, 1999).

A number of scholars (e.g., Kohn, 2000, MacBeath, 1999, Thrupp and Willmott, 2003, Woods, 2004), school communities, and educators have sought to resist this agenda, arguing that it impinges on higher, i.e., progressive, educational values and aims. Some contend that while the purported aim of the neo-liberal agenda is to provide more power

³ Many scholars contend that the U.S. Commission's 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*, was one significant turning point in the rise of the neo-liberal agenda. The U.S. government came, thereafter, to regard education as a 'high stakes' domain, which had the potential to jeopardize a nation's well-being in an increasingly globalized economy (Wong et al., 2004).

⁴ The underlying belief is that by "*utilizing engineering and management techniques long known to business, and to which much of its success may be attributed, education could overcome serious problems of inefficiency and economy*" and begin to meet the demands of the rapidly-changing global economy (Wagner, 1989: 17 in Robertson, 2003b: 282).

to the 'consumer', i.e., parents of students, who will ultimately be required to compete in the global economy – in fact, the opposite has occurred. I.e., this push has, ironically, centralized power in the hands of these large institutions, particularly federal and regional governments, which in turn has necessitated a top-down leadership model within schools (Lauder et al., 1998). Some of these critics seek to reform this approach -either from within or without - and have even proposed alternative accountability mechanisms (e.g., Bottery, 2001, 2002, Fuhrman and Elmore, 2004). Many critics, however – particularly those working in schools – seem to be resigned to the neo-liberal approach to education (Hatcher, 2004, Thrupp and Wilmott, 2003). I will examine the impact of this prevailing neo-liberal agenda in terms of accountability and management in subsequent sections and chapters, and the extent to which it has been embraced, resisted, or tolerated by educators as well as scholars.

This neo-liberal agenda constructs curriculum largely as product and transmission, and casts teachers as technicians (Madaus and Kelleghan, 1992). Certainly the norm of teacher as sole “*curriculum maker*” (Clandinin and Connelley, 1992) - most often associated with an emphasis on curriculum as process, and the ascendance of progressivism up to the 1950s - is not widely accepted today (Hargreaves, 2000: 158).

Coordination

Coordination is an important role for management which involves bringing together different parts to make an integrated whole. The father of systematic management, Fayol, defines the concept as “*unify(ing) and harmoniz(ing) all activities and efforts*” (1987: 13).⁵ Management theorist, Mintzberg, asserts that coordination presupposes an opposite process, the division of labour of the task into subtasks to support specialization; it is the coordination of these subtasks which is essential to accomplish the overall task (1979: 2). Often organization and coordination are used interchangeably.

Coordination involves a variety of mechanisms. Mintzberg identifies three essentials: mutual adjustment (i.e., informal feedback), direct supervision, and standardization – of work processes, outputs, skills, and knowledge (1979: 3). Such standards, according to

⁵ Social scientists, Gulick and Urwick (Papers on the Science of Administration, 1937), include coordination in their list of seven major functions of a manager, known by its acronym, POSDCORB, and define it similarly: “*interrelating the various entities and processes of the work*”.

Mintzberg, are established through a programmatic, i.e., transactional, approach. Work processes are standardized by establishing rules and routines; skills and knowledge come from specified and standardized training.

Coordination is not, however, simply a matter of supervising, in which a superior directs subordinates to implement decisions – with a sanctioned system of rewards and punishments awaiting them; nor is it only about programming, i.e., processes, outputs, skills and knowledge. There is a substantial social dimension: shaping culture is central to this role. Indeed, Mintzberg later added standardization of norms, i.e., transformational approach, to his list of management functions (1989: 228). He described this mechanism as establishing common values and belief, i.e., culture, through socialization, in order to work toward common expectations. After all, rules might be ignored if not viewed as legitimate. Legitimacy is earned by means of an interactive process, in which the standards of quality can be endorsed by employees, whether they subscribe to them inherently or through influence. In larger terms, if the staff culture is attended to, the organization's vision can be better reflected in employees' practices. Litterer (1973) argues that such standardization of norms is most often established through "*facilitated coordination*": by liaising between positions and resolving a variety of challenges and conflicts.

The challenge for a manager is to decide which mechanism(s) to use in each situation – voluntary, i.e., mutual adjustment, directed, i.e., supervision or programme, or facilitated coordination. Hatch (1997) asserts that as organizations become larger, and tasks more highly skilled, processes become more complex and less predictable (pp. 166-167). While the need for horizontal communication grows, directive coordination becomes less appropriate. Certainly, with technology increasingly being utilized for communication, more interdependence is embedded in the system; and more voluntary coordination takes place. The need, however, for on-going facilitation is also greater, Litterer (1973) contends, in terms of liaising, problem-solving, and influencing culture. This particular mode of coordination, and coordination more generally, are evidently complex social undertakings.

This analysis of the fundamental concepts of curriculum and coordination has both values and limitations. The review of management literature establishes core functions of coordination; it, nevertheless, lacks immediate relevance to school settings, particularly since management has traditionally focused on industrial production, rather than child development. In addition, I suggest that the concepts of culture and (standardization of)

norms require much closer examination and further definition, particularly in an educational change process. While my examination of curriculum also provides a helpful framework for classifying types of approach and organization, understanding the assumptions of each, and considering some of the current political pressures; it, too, lacks sufficient particularities for a more probing analysis. There is, however, an important hypothesis that emerges from analysing these two concepts, curriculum and coordination, in relation. If an emphasis on standardization of work - processes, outputs, skills, and knowledge - were prescribed in the realm of curriculum, coordinators would be presented with a difficult task – i.e., facilitating interaction, influencing culture, and establishing legitimacy. The extent to which this hypothesis is accurate in the field of middle management will be considered in the subsequent section.

II. Middle Management

Middle management literature provides relevant research from which to draw in order to understand the role of MYP coordinator. This literature most often focuses upon the subject leader⁶ – a role set within, rather than across subjects. This literature, nevertheless, sheds light on the role of those who are positioned in the middle of the school hierarchy, i.e., below the head and above the teachers, and have been given some form of delegated responsibility for which they are directly accountable. In undertaking this review I will draw upon key points from the prior section, including components and categories of curriculum and coordination, as well as related organizational, social, and political dimensions. The most important issue which emerged, the complexity of the challenge for coordinators of curriculum in a predominantly neo-liberal context, will be a chief consideration as I proceed.

Over the last few decades education leadership and management literature emphasizing 'knowledge for action' as its primary objective has become prolific. Indeed, the school effectiveness genre stemmed in many ways from governments' neo-liberal mandate to reform education in the 1980s. The school improvement genre followed, which, in turn, spawned a number of action-oriented sub-genres such as management of change and sustainable leadership – which speak primarily about and to school heads. Critics (e.g., Thrupp and Willmott, 2003) see these 'problem-solving' approaches as often glib and

⁶ The English National College for Leadership in Schools and Children's Services now refers to subject leaders as 'middle leaders', which, I contend, obscures the domain for which this role is responsible.

socially and politically decontextualized, therefore tacitly reinforcing a neo-liberal, 'managerialist' approach to leadership. Such critics urge more of a 'problematizing' approach in this field of literature, given the negative pressures which, they argue, leaders face in a predominantly neo-liberal context. I will keep such criticisms in mind in my analysis of middle management literature.

Subject Leader

There has been an increasing focus on middle management, especially on the role of subject leader (SL), in recent school reform efforts and the corresponding field of educational leadership. There are two important reasons. First, this focus reflects how schools are organized. As stated earlier, the most common way of organizing teaching and learning, particularly in secondary schools, is by subject. Subject departments are practical, immediate units of organization to manage – and also to study. Second and more important, researchers from the school effectiveness and school improvement (SESI) movements came to acknowledge the centrality of the subject department and its leadership in successful reform. Such neo-liberal reform emphasized quantitative tracking of academic performance. Indeed, the largest U.K. study of differential school effectiveness highlighted the importance of differences between subject departments in explaining differences in school performance (Sammons et al., 1997).⁷

The role of SL had often been perceived to be transactional, particularly before the school improvement movement. The role was, for example, thought to be limited to fulfilling low level management tasks, e.g., budget, supplies, (Hannay and Ross, 1999) or executing orders from above, particularly in ensuring subject standards were met (Adey, 2000). Brown et al. (1999) report that there often persists "*very little whole-school thinking at middle management level, let alone whole-school participation*" (Bennett, 1999: 291). The need to reconceptualize this role to include more dynamic, substantive aspects of leadership has begun to be addressed through government policies, training, e.g., English National College for Leadership in Schools and Children's Services, and research (Bush and Jackson, 2002).

⁷ Other studies focusing on the relationship between departmental leadership and the differential performance of departments include: Bennett, 1995; Harris et al., 1995; Turner, 1996; and Harris, 1998 (Busher and Harris, 1999: 307).

Subject leadership is complex and demanding to understand, let alone to master. There are numerous tasks, organizational factors, and types of subject departments. For example, Siskin (1994) classifies departments according to kinds of communities or cultures: bundled, bonded, fragmented, and split communities. Busher and Harris (1999) present a typology of departments according to structure: federal, confederate, unitary, impacted, and diffuse. The English Teacher Training Agency pares SLs' main tasks down to: strategic and subject direction; improving teaching and learning (pedagogy, assessment, and curriculum); leading and managing staff (community and cohesion); and effective deployment of staff and resources. Busher (2006) proposes adding: creating professional networks; liaising with other stakeholders; and exerting power and influence. Sammons et al. (1997) insist that SLs must lead by example, specifically in terms of subject expertise. Moyles et al. (1998) see the primary role as mentor, who encourages, coaches, aids in critical reflection, evaluates, advocates, and provides personal friendship and counselling. Each of these proposals for effective middle management may have some validity; however, as a composite list for any acting middle manager to fulfill, it appears overwhelming, thus, unrealistic.

The role, positioned in the middle, offers immense opportunities. From the head of school's perspective, an SL's regular and immediate contact with teachers is often the best chance for fostering significant change. From teachers' perspective, SLs share their experience as classroom teacher, often struggling alongside departmental colleagues to implement mandated reforms. The role is valuable not only for a school's curriculum development but also its staff development; therein is great potential *"to tie the management of curriculum to the management of change"* in terms of pedagogical practices, collegial behaviours, building capacity, creating new structures, and transforming culture (Edwards, 1993: 51).

This role appears, however, foremost to be ambiguous, if not contradictory. From the SL's perspective, the role presents the challenge of trying to bridge the vision and strategic initiatives of a head with the messy reality of life on the frontlines, often putting them *"centre stage in the emotional and political drama of the school"* (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002: 318). The research has honed in on the fact that SLs are often left feeling *"squeezed in the middle"* – especially if they are both teaching and managing - having to act as advocates for colleagues and agents for senior management (Gleeson and Shain, 1999: 469).

In order to mediate between policy and practice, in both the political micro- and macro-spheres, SLs must be politically astute, understanding

how organizational systems work; the range of values and interests that individual people hold; the checks and balances influencing policy creation and projection; the construction of pressure groups and cohesive coalitions, and how power can be used to implement policies to sustain and transform departments...(Busher, 2006: 144)

According to Busher, the creative leader recognizes opportunity to synchronize individual and school needs in a collaborative way (2006: 141). Busher elaborates:

middle managers barter and build visions of success with their colleagues..., asking them to enact certain policies in exchange for being able to shape the ways in which the policies were implemented, finding the touchstone of people's work-related values and interests which allow them to support the policy, even if grudgingly, rather than resist it. (2006: 147)

The literature underlines the importance of influence in the role of SL. A common refrain in research and policy is that SLs must be able to develop cultures of collaboration. As Audrey-Hopkins and James (2002) state, this task involves

both formal and informal means of communication where decisions were jointly settled, policies were collectively developed, good practice was shared and standards were accepted. (p. 316)

To this end, James and Connolly (2000) explain that leadership is a process of influencing others to take up and enact roles. SLs have a unique opportunity, because of where they are placed in the hierarchy, to support and influence their colleagues and to build such culture. In order to succeed, SLs must be both trusted and persuasive.

There is a core assumption, both implicit and explicit, in the middle management literature. It is an assumption which underlies the emphases on building cultures of collaboration and mediating between policy and practice; it extends beyond any belief that teachers need gentle nudging and support in their development, even if this should

be a professional inclination. The core assumption is that, in the current neo-liberal context in which an externally prescribed regime of accountability is imposed upon the school and the teaching faculty, improvement through collaboration is an essential expectation.

This expectation presents SLs with a conflict of cultural norms and, hence, a conflict of loyalties. On the one hand, departmental collegiality often “*overlays an emphasis on individual professional autonomy*” (Bennett et al., 2007: 457), and such autonomy is the norm, as are the perceptions by SLs that they must act as the buffer for their departmental colleagues. There is little feeling of a higher calling to the school as collegium, to the group of SLs or to the head, when it conflicts with such pre-existing professional norms (Bennett et al., 2007: 457). These norms are not surprising, given the separation by department - both in the curriculum and often in the physical structure. On the other hand, there is an expectation from senior management that the subject leader establish a new norm with department colleagues in which collaboration is a means for fulfilling externally-prescribed standards and driving school improvement.

Tensions between subject department loyalty and adherence to management’s improvement agenda become particularly acute, for example, when SLs are expected to evaluate colleagues; they often feel uncomfortable evaluating people whom they consider peers. Bennett et al. (2007) report that where

*middle leaders were expected to motivate, support and develop staff; the evidence indicates that this role, with its implicit demand that the middle leader should monitor the work of their staff, is fraught with difficulties.*⁸
(p. 457)

Foremost, SLs found classroom observation most difficult; they preferred to look at results or student work as a more informal means of evaluation of performance (Bennett et al., 2007: 458).

⁸ Based on a study by Glover et al.(1998).

I perceive a significant disconnect between SLs' authority (i.e., formal power) and legitimacy or credibility (i.e., informal power and respect) as a consequence of these divergent role expectations. SLs' main sources of institutional power include "*delegated authority, systemic support for action and material resources to implement approved policies*" (Busher, 2006: 39). In contrast, they derive legitimacy in the eyes of department members mainly by leading by example - primarily in subject expertise (Sammons et al: 1997). SLs themselves often view the role more as one of managing curriculum than colleagues (Brown and Rutherford, 1999) - which is consistent with their colleagues' expectations.

I suggest there are important emotional, as well as political, social dimensions to this role conflict. As Kelchtermans (2005: 997) reports on Nias's study (1999: 226),

educational reforms that were not congruent with the teachers' deeply held beliefs about good teaching, but from which teachers felt they could not escape, clearly contributed to the experience of vulnerability and emotional disturbance.

While senior management expects SLs to influence their colleagues in order to implement policy effectively, SLs realize that their legitimacy resides elsewhere; moreover, they are often vulnerable to peer pressure. This disconnect between authority and legitimacy, i.e., formal and informal power, may put SLs in a position where they are emotionally torn. SLs may find it difficult to separate their espoused view of departmental leadership - to be collegial, supportive, loyal, and respectful of teachers' autonomy - and their leadership in practice - authoritative, evaluative - which they may perceive as being manipulative and coercive (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002).

In concluding the section, I recognize that there are several limitations to the middle management literature reviewed here. In contrast to much literature in the larger field of educational leadership, this genre tends to focus more on problematizing than proposing solutions; indeed, such proposals are both rare and unconvincing. This genre, however, is similar to much of the education leadership literature in its limitations of context. The majority of studies is British with particular factors at work which are often only implied,

e.g., elements of the government policies, the structure of governance. Moreover, SL expectations in the U.K are often not shared in North America, where, for example, 'department chairs' usually do not evaluate their department members (Bennett, 1999). It would be interesting to see more international studies of middle management across Anglophone nations with similar neo-liberal accountability pressures and organizational frameworks. This literature is also limited to focussing mainly on secondary school subject leaders. While there is some literature on curriculum coordinators in primary schools, there is no significant body of literature for middle school or Key Stage 3 middle managers. This literature lacks much consideration of organizational dynamics and the interaction between multiple levels of school hierarchy; and, to some extent, neglects issues of curriculum. In addition, because teamwork is such a focus, often other elements of middle leadership, such as induction and mentoring, are neglected.

My examination of this field of literature, nevertheless, has provided rich insights and raised complex and contentious issues about the role of middle management. The majority of this literature appears to support the hypothesis, which emerged in the prior section, that the task of coordination is made particularly difficult when an agenda favouring external accountability is prescribed. The role of SL is critical for school improvement efforts, particularly in negotiating teacher implementation. This undertaking is sufficiently challenging, as subject departments often form subcultures resistant to whole school collaboration. Such efforts are even harder when SLs are expected by senior management to be both evaluator and facilitator of collaboration. This demand presents SLs with a role conflict between this prescribed role of authority and a role they and their colleagues view as legitimate. There is often an uneasiness, if not unwillingness, to challenge their own and their colleagues' norms of practice. The extent to which this role conflict is encountered in the practice of MYP coordination will be considered in subsequent chapters.

III. Emergent Concepts

Collaboration and Teams

There is an emphasis in education policy and research on 'collaboration and teams' in the implementation of predominantly neo-liberal school reform. In this context middle managers are often expected to play the role of facilitator. I will therefore examine these concepts of collaboration and teams, in order to distill key attributes, challenges, and recommendations, particularly in terms of their social and political dimensions.

I begin with some fundamental understandings. Teams usually focus upon a specific goal and require coordination in order to achieve it (Larson and LaFasto, 1989: 19). The process a team undertakes is often described as collaboration, defined as the combining of resources to achieve a specific goal over a period of time, i.e., "*joint work for joint purposes*" (Wallace and Hall, 1993: 103). The benefits are clear: there is a synergy produced in learning from and supporting one another.⁹

While education leadership literature commonly extols the virtues of collaboration, it sometimes tends to present an idealized picture. In one prominent model of collaboration, Lave and Wenger's 'communities of practice' (1991), participation is voluntary and based on professional interest. Members come motivated, with a shared goal; they participate in a process which is inclusive and arrive at a decision by consensus, with the experience improving the overall working culture (O'Neill, 1997: 79). In this conception, sharing, co-operating, and exercising joint control - all seem to hinge on a pre-existing commonality of interests, beliefs, and values.

Such conformity and cohesion may be found in some teams (e.g., subject departments). The literature, however, indicates a number of social barriers that teams often must overcome. Studies show constructive teamwork happens where "*people know and like each other personally*", i.e., where trust has already been established (Nias et al., 1989). Grossman et al. (2001) point out the pervasive phenomenon of 'pseudo communities' in which teachers rarely feel free to criticize one another's ideas or understandings due to their own overriding norms of privacy and politeness. The barriers would only increase if there were unfriendliness, disinterest or substantial differences of opinion. Collaboration

⁹ Wallace and Hall, 1994:1 describe synergy as "*something more than the simple combination of individuals*".

may also strike teachers as unnatural in spending extensive amounts of time outside of the classroom, when they return to these isolated contexts in which they exercise individual control (O'Neill, 1997). Certainly, teachers sometimes feel "*overmanaged*" (Ribbins, 1985) by such 'collaborative' work. And, if the collaboration exists in response to accountability pressures from above, which seek to change this norm of professional autonomy for school improvement purposes, the collegiality is, indeed, often "*contrived*" (Hargreaves, 1991).

Teamwork has the potential to damage relations. For example, there is the unwitting danger of 'groupthink', i.e., much cohesion, yet little critical evaluation (Janis, 1983). Witting ways can include teamwork which is 'staged' by a manipulative manager or employed as a tool for co-opting teachers to conform to pre-determined agendas, which Sinclair (1992) labels as the 'tyranny of team ideology'. Additionally, resisters can hijack the agenda or subvert policies to serve their own needs. Lipsky (1980) calls this strategy, 'street level bureaucracy' (in James and Jones, 2008: 5). Such scenarios can ultimately contribute to a dysfunctional school culture.

In analysing the spectrum of literature, a particular approach emerges for establishing a strong, healthy collaborative process. This approach – which I will call 'constructive discourse' – not only addresses problems and conflicts but encourages divergence in order for eventual convergence (e.g., Heifetz and Laurie, 1997).¹⁰ As one prominent developmental model of teamwork (1965) states, 'storming' (i.e., different ideas competing for consideration) must precede (re)-norming.¹¹ By inviting different points of view, underlying issues can be examined critically (Dalin et al., 1993: 28). Such an approach helps to make assumptions explicit, confront entrenched professional positions, air differences, pinpoint key impediments, generate alternatives, and arrive at creative solutions (Wallace and Huckman, 1999: 207–208). This approach may, at times, produce a winning solution. More often, however, this approach is dialectical in nature – resulting in compromise which seeks to incorporate, if not completely reconcile, different perspectives. This approach may also frequently be dialogic. I.e., different solutions may

¹⁰ Morley and Hosking (2003) use a similar term, 'disputation'. O'Neill (1997) uses the term 'constructive conflict', which might appear to go too far in implying a 'show-down' in which there must be a winner.

¹¹ Tuckman's developmental model of teamwork includes four stages: forming (i.e., orientation, initiation); storming (i.e., different ideas compete for consideration); norming (i.e., common rules, values, and behaviours are agreed upon); and performing (i.e., team members execute tasks in interaction) (1965). While this model was developed for a military context, it has also been applied to education.

coexist, with each being applied to a different situation or setting. Constructive discourse may be particularly valuable in schools since their cultures *“are traditionally characterized more by compliance than by engagement and ownership”* (Wagner et al., 2006, in Helsing et al., 2008: 461).

There are several additional though important underlying attributes of this approach, which the literature suggests are important for effectiveness. First, and not surprisingly, trust and respect emerge as core values underpinning this process, especially when teachers may be particularly cynical about the extent to which the intent and outcomes of such collaboration are externally prescribed. Second, mutual reflection is recommended throughout this process – not only about where the team assesses itself to be collectively and where it seeks to develop, but also in terms of the collaborative process itself (James, 2007). Such an honest and open approach can also serve as an emotional container for teachers within which anxieties and difficult emotions can be held (Aubrey-Hopkins and James, 2002: 316-317). Third, one should not overlook that, while some of this interaction takes the form of formal meetings,

often much more important is the informal learning activity consisting of unscheduled discussions, debate and conversation about strategic questions that goes on continuously at all levels in the organization.
(Davies, 2007: 4)

In reviewing the literature on teams and collaboration, there were several important aspects which I found to be lacking. For one, mentoring appears to be somewhat overlooked as a form of collaboration which has significant potential value for school improvement as well as individuals' professional development. Mentoring usually occurs as a one-to-one relationship in which a more experienced staff member acts as a 'critical friend' to a less experienced member (Busher, 2006: 142). Often mentoring is a formal arrangement, whether as an induction requirement for newly qualified teachers or as part of a prescribed implementation plan to fulfill a school improvement agenda. Mentoring is sometimes taken up informally, i.e., in sharing expertise and experience spontaneously. As I elucidated earlier in this literature review (see p. 16), mentoring is one important function for middle managers to take up with their teaching colleagues.

I assert that research on mentoring contributes much to this model of effective collaboration as constructive discourse. Daloz (1986) postulates that effective mentoring involves high levels of challenge and support in combination (p. 214). In order for significant professional growth to occur, these two elements should work in 'delicate' balance, with both affective and cognitive aspects addressed over a considerable period of time (Elliott and Calderhead, 1993: 172-3). Challenge brings cognitive dissonance, thus, often anxiety. Mentees will only persevere if such challenge is small, gradual, and there is accompanying support. If there is not sufficient challenge, however, this process is often one which simply confirms the mentee's pre-existing images of teaching (Cameron-Jones & O'Hara, 1997: 17).

Bush et al. (1996) identify two potential weaknesses of mentoring: incompatibility between mentor and mentee, and time (p.122). If these two factors do not become major obstacles, there is a strong possibility for a mutually rewarding experience, in which the mentor's leadership is valued and the mentee benefits from practical guidance. Moreover, effective mentoring has a positive impact socially and emotionally, reducing professional isolation and anxiety (Bush et al., 1996: 140). I would contend that, if this relationship fosters trust and respect, it is here - perhaps more so than in larger group settings - where difficult conversations about norms of belief and practice might stand the best chance of being constructive (McIntyre and Hagger, 1997: 146). In such cases, it is not only a middle managers' teaching expertise that is critical, but also their interpersonal skills of listening and feedback with their mentee (e.g., Bush et al., 1996: 132, Daloz, 1986: 215-220). Accordingly, professional development of such key elements of mentoring would be helpful.

Another important limitation of the literature on collaboration and teams is the dearth of direct treatment of the role of facilitator. This is a role with whom much of the challenge of this "*complex and arduous*" process appears to reside (Schwab, 1978: 318). I infer that effective facilitators must be role models, who exemplify key attributes of effective teams. Facilitators must aspire to be honest brokers, who can confront others, invite divergence, but also cultivate trust and possess creative problem-solving skills and political savvy for transcending these differences. Facilitators must be effective in eliciting and orchestrating team members' views, with the ability to synthesize these views in a concrete and productive way – even if the result is a compromise. I appreciate

Schwab's contributions, in particular his recommendation of choosing a facilitator for his proposed curriculum committee from the teaching staff - on the basis, I expect, of their perceived trustworthiness and credibility with the team's members, teachers. I would have found helpful, however, research on the head's supporting role in such facilitation, to which Schwab only alludes (1978: 247).

I also suggest that more attention could be paid to the political dimensions of collaborative work. Generally, a close examination of elements such as origins, composition, structure, dynamic, and leadership need be considered in order to understand the political nature, i.e., underlying power dynamics, of a particular team and its collaboration process.¹² Resource implications, which are often challenges of collaboration, are another important political element which is often underappreciated. There could also be a more explicit acknowledgement of the larger political context. Indeed, there commonly appears to be an important distinction left unsaid: if macro-decisions about school improvement have already been made, then collaboration is most often within the scope of the micro-decisions of implementation.¹³

In concluding this section, I want to underline two substantial barriers to collaboration, which are largely beyond a facilitator's control. First and most important, there are often external demands for collaboration, which by nature, are hierarchical, thus, undermining the principle of the venture - joint work for joint purposes. Second, while secondary school departmental teams in many ways offer the best hope for effective collaboration, their sub-cultural nature presents a major barrier to whole school teamwork. Siskin (1997) suggests that to be more than the sum of its departmental parts, there is a need to

start building bridges, supporting strong leadership within departments, but also creating a variety of committees, task forces and exchange programmes that will span them. (p. 613)

¹² Examples for each of the following aspects of teams include: origins - ad hoc or planned, by whom, rationale, historical context; composition - chosen by whom, according to what criteria, from what constituencies or (sub-)groups, with what resources to offer; structure and dynamic - time frame, stage of development, forum or mode, individual members' roles; and leadership - de facto or pre-chosen, if so, by whom, how are the decisions made, who has related powers.

¹³ Hargreaves provides the example that: *(i)n England...while the National Curriculum initially created more teacher consultation and collaboration, 'the deluge of directives' that fell upon teachers reduced much of this collaboration to technical tasks of coordination rather than working together for fundamental change*" (2000: 166).

Even so, cross-curricular collaboration is inherently more challenging than subject-based collaboration since its areas of responsibility and accountability are less defined for both teachers and facilitator, and less ownership is taken outside of teachers' immediate professional homes, i.e., subject departments (O'Neill, 1997).

In reviewing this body of literature, it is evident that collaboration can be a valuable method for school improvement. Effective collaboration, however, is often hard, messy work. Conflict and resistance may increase with this approach, especially given that the collaboration does not emanate from voluntary interest or professional beliefs, rather is initiated from above. The research suggests that an effective process must embrace conflict to a certain extent and channel it toward constructive discourse. I argue that, while much is dependent on the larger political context, much is also dependent on the immediate school context – in terms of micro-political dynamics, the affective domain, particularly trust and fear, as well as structures, e.g., subject-based organization. These challenges leave much to be resolved by the leadership. I will be interested to see in my empirical study how the tension between structure, culture, and agency is managed by MYP coordinators in seeking to facilitate effective teamwork - particularly interdisciplinary - in their school settings.

Accountability

The concepts of teams and collaboration cannot be considered in isolation from the larger political context. As seen in previous sections, political pressures for reform have been a driving force in promoting these concepts. Teams are, in this context, meant to re-norm in order to satisfy external accountability demands. Such external mechanisms run contrary to a professionally-based approach of teachers voluntarily establishing collaborative teams, e.g., professional learning communities. Indeed, there is an underlying tension at work between two forms of accountability: that which is externally-prescribed – which I will call 'managerial accountability' - and that which is internally-derived – which I will call 'professional accountability'.

I will analyse both of these conceptions which figure so prominently in current literature, particularly as they relate to middle management. I will guard against formulating any one, essential, definition of each. As Wittgenstein (1953: 66 in Wagner, 1989: 7) points out, uses of terms usually comprise a "*family of meanings*", which are united by a "*complicated network of similarities*" rather than by sharing a clearly defined essence.

These two terms, moreover, are teleological in “*contain(ing) assumptions about the desirable purposes or ends*” of education (Kogan, 1986: 28). Each term represents a starkly different emphasis or approach, if not diametrically opposed paradigm, of education. Such categorical representations may inherently be shaped by biases and dynamics of power, especially if they operate as dominant paradigms. These representations are, nevertheless, useful as a way to classify and locate aspects of an educational programme and its models of leadership in the larger landscape of current education management literature. The dimensions of these categorical representations, moreover, will serve as useful reference points and analytical lenses in this enquiry for understanding the MYP and its coordination.

At root there are two disparate conceptions of accountability: being called into account and giving account. These two conceptions represent two distinct approaches to leading teachers. The former is usually associated with managerial accountability, involving an investigative stance that is externally imposed, pressure being implied, and being answerable primarily to one’s clients, i.e., parents, and one’s funders, i.e., government (Elliott, 1981, Poulson, 1998). The latter conception is usually associated with professional accountability: giving voluntary accounts of decision or practices in a context of dialogue, being answerable primarily to oneself (morally) and one’s colleagues, and implying a high level of trust, cooperation, and support (Poulson, 1998).

Managerial Accountability

The former approach, managerial accountability, has become the predominant emphasis in the current neo-liberal educational landscape, heavily impacting schools’ management roles and organizational culture.¹⁴ ‘Managerialism’, as it has been labeled, involves school managers acting as the relay of these accountability policies (Pollitt, 1993; Clarke and Newman, 1997 in Simkins, 2000). The approach emphasizes performance management by which managers are granted greater powers to manage teachers in order to prepare for external inspections and ensure teachers, in turn, prepare students for performance tests. Middle managers have been enlisted in this push, although not without some resistance or at least discomfort. SLs have been especially uneasy with the expectation of evaluating teaching colleagues, as was elucidated previously.

¹⁴ While there has been a high degree of policy convergence amongst Anglophone nations, there is some variation as to the extent and the mechanisms. For example, the U.S. neo-liberal shift did not involve as much of a centralized oversight body, as prescribed a curriculum, nor does it offer as much school choice as that in the U.K. (Hirsch, 2005)

This approach, while rooted in authoritative power, i.e., of the head and the governing body, invests much in establishing its legitimacy - an acknowledgement that school reform implementation succeeds only if staff members deem it worthwhile and trust their leaders. Certainly, 'directive managerialism', which relies on punitive measures and rewards, is readily available to senior managers (Hatcher, 2004: 3). While this might be the sole emphasis in Taylorist forms of managerialism, it is commonly understood that *"power without trust destroys one's base in the long run"* (Sørhaug, 1996 in Møller and Eggen, 2005, 345). The more common form of managerial accountability, which I will call 'collaborative managerialism', by contrast, seeks to gain teachers' support for policies, foremost, through persuasion - although this approach can also become more manipulative than reasonable. Collaboration, in this case, is the primary tool for creating a legitimizing norm, and, thus, effective school improvement. Middle managers, as we have seen in preceding sections, appear to be a valuable resource as facilitators towards this end.

Professional Accountability

The core principle of the latter approach, professional accountability, is that teachers will want to give account of themselves voluntarily, if given the opportunity, according to criteria determined primarily within the professional community of teachers. The premise is that only those within the profession

possess the proper knowledge, skills, and orientations necessary to make decisions as to how the work is to be performed and evaluated. (van Maanen and Barley, 1984 in Siskin, 1994: 187)

One form of professional accountability, which I will call 'autonomous professionalism', purports teachers having individual autonomy as professionals in their classrooms (Hoyle, 1985). This approach arose in the 1960's, with huge economic investments being made in education, and was often associated with progressive, process-focussed curriculum. The assumption is that teaching is fundamentally an individual enterprise, from planning to execution, with teachers having the prerogative to shape curriculum and

choose their pedagogical methods individually (Metcalf and Russell, 1997). With such an approach, innovation might take place but is likely uneven in its implementation (Hargreaves, 2000). Interaction with teaching colleagues and management is more *“around materials, discipline, and individual student problems, rather than about curriculum goals, teaching behaviour, or classroom learning”* – and certainly would not involve feedback about one’s practice (Hargreaves, 2000: 158, drawing upon Lortie, 1975; Little, 1990). While there may be a wealth of professional development initiatives, as was the case in the 1960’s, these are often *“off-site and away from immediate colleagues”*, and not part of a coherent and sustained development plan (Hargreaves, 2000: 160). ‘Autonomous professionalism’ certainly did not appear to enhance teaching and learning in the 1960’s; in affective terms, by allowing teachers to remain isolated and insulated, this approach was harmful to their self-confidence (Hargreaves, 2000: 161).

Another variant of professional accountability, which I will call ‘collaborative professionalism’ postulates that, teachers will naturally want to improve, and do so collaboratively, i.e., within their professional communities (and sometimes even in consultation with other stakeholders) (Hargreaves, 1994: 424. See also Apple and Beane, 1999; Casey, 2000). Curriculum planning is both initiated and managed by teachers (MacBeath, 1999:1 in Robertson, 2003: 283). While decisions must sometimes be negotiated with senior managers, senior managers are more often involved in supporting teachers’ initiatives. Middle managers act foremost as facilitators or representatives of their teaching colleagues in the school-based improvement process. This form of professionalism has resonated with educators not only as a response to more directive forms of neo-liberal accountability since the 1980s (Helsby and McCulloch, 1997) but also due to the recent educational research highlighting the value of collaboration, cognitive and, thus, pedagogical diversity (Hargreaves, 2000: 163). Hatcher (2004) claims that this form of self-management no longer exists in Britain but can be found in some schools in the U.S. (p. 7).

Proponents of collaborative professionalism claim that the potential for substantive improvement is greater than with other forms of accountability. With ownership comes trust and motivation. Opportunities come via honest self-directed evaluation and peer feedback; as well as through meaningful professional development, which is more likely *“embedded in the life and work of the school”*, rather than being *“delivered by extraneous experts in off-site locations”* (Hargreaves, 2000: 165). This approach appears to be

healthier – in its inherent openness and confidence - and more effective than that of the autonomous professional - in providing feedback, as well as learning, and moral support in a collective improvement process.

Comparing Managerial and Professional Accountability

Critics of neo-liberal school reform claim not only that managerialism subordinates professional autonomy but it often uses collaboration as a manipulative tool for co-opting support for this externally-imposed mandate. The goal, according to Hargreaves (1997), is not a more equitable redistribution of power, rather the appearance thereof through mechanics and symbols. *“Bold (democratic) rhetoric disguises balder realities”*; with *“professional growth (being) subsumed into a framework of administrative control”* (Hargreaves, 1997: 341). Thrupp and Willmott (2003), moreover, accuse many education leadership writers of being ‘textual apologists’, who are complicit in this effort. These apologists encourage transformational processes and emphasize collective planning without acknowledging that much of the school’s improvement has been prescribed. I would concur to some extent. Leading textual apologist, Fullan (2001), for example, admits that schools are often victim to oppressive hierarchies bombarding them with multiple colliding demands while strangling them with quite limited resources (p. 47). Fullan then often quickly brushes aside these obstacles, and takes many of his exemplars of effective change from a business context, which does not face such obstacles (Robertson, 2006).

Collaborative managerialism, as the most prevalent thrust of school improvement policies, certainly makes middle management difficult. The review of middle management literature revealed the tension between collaboration, often seen by teachers as belonging more in the professional domain, and evaluation, usually associated with the managerial domain. The review elucidated a stark example of assumptions or norms which seem to conflict. This tension, in the predominantly neo-liberal context of today’s education landscape, clearly makes the role of middle manager a challenging one. On the one hand, the middle manager is expected to exert authority in order to meet prescribed expectations from above. On the other hand, legitimacy and the inherent trust and respect one must gain from teacher colleagues comes through persuasion and a variety of other methods of facilitation.

On the other hand, I aver that Thrupp and Willmott (2003) tend to idealize professional accountability. This progressive model of leadership, with its emphasis a facilitation of democratic collaboration, can present many problems of its own. Collegiality can be just as easily contrived in this context as in any neo-liberal one. Hargreaves (1997), for one, does not take such a romanticized view that teacher professionalism simply needs to be unleashed from bureaucratic control in order to release its abounding moral virtue. Hargreaves (1997) argues that culture must be sustained by a variety of strategies which seek to overcome cases of teacher stagnation, the often “*balkanized, isolating domain of departmental politics*” and other vested interests, in order for “*teachers to be able to make change as a community in the interests of the students they know best*” (p. 350). Arriving at a more democratically-driven vision, which Hargreaves favours, however, is not without difficulties. While the roles of principals and middle managers are primarily conceived as supportive of teachers’ choices, giving voice to teachers above the principal and at the exclusion of other stakeholders such as parents or students can also lead to a distorted, incoherent vision (Hargreaves, 1997 in Robertson, 2006).

I would point out that, despite contrasting conceptions of accountability, the most predominant form of each, collaborative managerialism and collaborative professionalism, share one principle assumption about accountability. The assumption is that teachers and their managers must do more than meet standards; they must continually seek to improve – accountability, thus, becomes the baseline for on-going improvement and development. There are three supporting assumptions underpinning this principle assumption. First, evaluation is desirable. Second, evaluation leads to professional development, i.e., assessing practice generates goals for improvement. Third, such evaluation and professional development are more effective when undertaken collaboratively rather than autonomously, i.e., teachers come to a shared set of aims and objectives, and in so doing, learn from and support one another.

In concluding this comparative analysis of these two conceptions of accountability – managerial and professional - I wish to make two major caveats. First, such approaches are rarely seen in their pure forms; rather it is a matter of emphases playing themselves out through the aspirations of those involved on the ground and the realities of their particular settings. In typical cases, such as Chapman’s case study of a comprehensive school, a mix of autocratic and democratic approaches are used by the leadership team, depending on the situation (2003: 101 in Hatcher, 2004: 4). There are, moreover, approaches that do not fit into this dichotomy neatly. If external accountability is minimal

or non-existent, this does not mean that, instead, there will be a strong emphasis on professional accountability, in which teachers offer to give account voluntarily. Self-managing schools, for example, usually establish some form of internal accountability mechanisms, in which teachers are called to account by their managers, even if such mechanisms are based upon professionally-derived standards (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992).

Second, while these labels and categorical distinctions may be helpful as reference points, one must go beyond the ideological and the connotative assumptions to determine how effectively these approaches play out in practice. It may appear that managerial accountability has been presented pejoratively and professional accountability eulogistically - this is, however, not necessarily the case. Certainly, on the one hand, many in the field of educational leadership see the neo-liberal emphasis on managerial accountability over the last few decades as 'deprofessionalising'. Hargreaves, for example, has found that in some cases such reform has played a major role in *"destroy(ing) the creativity which enabled imaginative teachers to seek local community responses or give individual attention to particular needs"* (2001: 119). On the other hand, Hargreaves also found that some teachers actually welcomed external accountability (e.g., standardized student evaluation) as it provided recognition of the good work they were already doing (2001). Fullan (2001) presents similar evidence: an initial external commitment, involving policies and practices that effectively support employees accomplishing their tasks, often leads to internal commitment, deriving from a job being intrinsically rewarding (p. 8). There are many who assert that - whatever the political motivation or business influence - external forms of accountability can be constructive in informing professional development and, vice versa, that local needs and experiences can help to shape the mechanisms of accountability (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991).

I assert, in concluding my review of this literature, that the elements of pressure and support appear to have the potential to be complementary approaches which can work very effectively when combined. The challenge for policy-makers and educational leaders is to create collaborative professional communities which are, as Hargreaves states,

authentic, well supported, and include fundamental purposes, and benefit teachers and students alike (collegial professionalism), without using collaboration as a device to overload teachers, or to steer unpalatable policies through them. (2000: 166)

For such a complementary approach to succeed, according to Hargreaves (2000), it must be based on explicit professional standards and involve constructive school - community interaction, substantial collaboration time, and effective professional development (p. 171). This extent to which characteristics of this or the other forms of accountability and collaboration described above are present in MYP school settings will be a major focus in the subsequent empirical enquiry.

IV. A Conceptual Framework for Analysing Coordination in the Implementation of Curriculum Reform

Distributed Leadership

Over the last decade, a 'distributed' view of leadership has become popular, in exploring the *"interaction of (multiple) leaders, followers and their situation in the execution of leadership tasks"* (Spillane et al., 2004). While distributed leadership focusses on more than collaborative practice, this approach may take various forms. Its unit of analysis may be concertive action or aggregated behaviour; it may take a top-down or bottom-up perspective (Zepke, 2007: 303). Foremost, a distributed approach to studying leadership emphasizes the properties which emerge from the relationships between key players in dealing with issues of leadership in a dynamic, ever-changing process – it is about the practice of leadership more than leaders themselves (Spillane et al., 2001). According to Spillane, a leading investigator of distributed leadership, understanding leadership practice must involve the examination of both social and material structures. Sergiovanni (2001), another prominent researcher, stresses the importance of understanding the norms of a school's work groups (emerging from each study of such distributed leadership).

The strength of distributed leadership is its appreciation for the multiple players and diverse contextual variables that are associated with leadership. Its weakness is its potential for becoming too expansive and, therefore, unfocussed in such considerations. In analysing organizations and their practices, distributed and delegated forms of leadership can easily become conflated, thus, begging questions of role, responsibility, and the distinction between formal and informal forms of authority and the extent of leaders' credibility. Sometimes it is unclear whether distributed leadership is advocated by researchers as a way of designing organizational leadership or as a way of diagnosing it. Indeed, distributed leadership has a chameleon-like quality, having been defined and applied in a wide variety of ways (Harris, 2007).

A distributed view, nonetheless, has influenced the design of my conceptual framework for analysing coordination in the implementation of curriculum reform. Curriculum coordinators certainly must take on difficult issues related to reform and usually do so from a position in the middle, i.e. between senior management and teachers. By looking at such coordination as an interactional process, a number of contextual variables can be understood. I have designed my conceptual framework, therefore, to account for both cultural and structural dimensions of key organizational dilemmas of such coordination, as I explain below.

Key Organizational Dilemmas

This review of literature has focused upon what is known of concepts relevant to MYP coordination in the current educational landscape. I contend that a series of connected issues or "*enduring dilemmas of school organization*" (Ogawa et al., 1999) has emerged. These are dilemmas in the sense that they are "*far messier, less structured and often intractable to routine solutions*" (Cuban, 1992: 6 in Ogawa et al., 1999: 278); they are enduring in the sense that they are unsolvable, "*recurrent and pervasive*" (Miles: 1981 in Ogawa et al., 1999: 279). Such dilemmas involve core values often at opposite poles of a continuum which are in conflict or tension. Ogawa et al. (1999) argue that the challenge is not to choose between the two sides but rather to manage the dilemma, sometimes acting to mitigate, create compromise or find alternative solutions. Satisfaction rather than optimization is implied.

The primary or central dilemma which has emerged from this literature review features two opposing forms of accountability, managerial and professional. The context for this dilemma is curriculum, i.e., the teaching and learning taking place in schools. Its key players are the middle managers, in their interaction with senior managers and teachers.

The secondary or related dilemmas involve tensions between:

- externally prescribed and internally derived curriculum, and its goal-setting and goal-measuring mechanisms, i.e., assessment and evaluation, e.g., product, process;
- the individual and the group, i.e., autonomy and collaboration;
- subject departments and the whole school, i.e., in terms of loyalty and structures, e.g., disciplinary vs. interdisciplinary work;
- hierarchical and collegial expectations of middle managers;
- directive and supportive approaches by middle managers, also in terms of means, e.g., manipulative or transparent; and
- authority and legitimacy, in terms of the perceptions of teachers, micro-political power, positioning of roles, and underlying affective domains, e.g., trust, fear.

The Cultural Dimension

There are two underlying dimensions to understanding this central dilemma and related dilemmas. The first dimension is cultural, i.e., tension between existing norms and the new norms which are being sought - in this case, by government and management. 'Reculturing' (or re-norming) as Fullan coins the term, i.e., "*changing the way we do things around here*" (Fullan, 2001: 44) involves reconciling default norms with expectations of reform. According to Fullan, this process has the potential to "*produce the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices*" (2001: 44). His description gravitates towards Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1997) explanation of culture as "*the way the group solves problems and reconciles dilemmas*". This conception, however, must itself be reconciled with or, indeed, overcome another conception of culture, as offered by Hofstede. Hofstede (1997) conceptualizes culture as

the software of the mind...(, i.e.,)we are programmed throughout our lives to conform to a particular set of values and belief systems through our

education, experiences and contacts with our environment. (Ezra, 2003: 125)

According to Fullan's conception of culture, collective action and process trump pre-existing values and belief systems of individuals or the group. With his mantra: action before belief, Fullan alludes to the frequent inevitability of change initially being externally-mandated (Robertson, 2006). Such accounts are often inconsistent with the experiences of many subject leaders, according to a number of recent U.K. studies, at the heart of which, these two conceptions of culture – Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's and Hofstede's – are found to be very difficult to reconcile.

This brief analysis of culture and reculturing, according to several scholars, reveals how such denotations are underpinned by values and beliefs themselves about the nature of change. As I proceed with this enquiry, I will apply the term 'norm' as a group's shared assumption or expectation (Morgan, 1997: 139 in Stoll, 1998: 10). I will apply the term 'culture' primarily in reference to schools' teaching staff, and according to the definition of: norms of values and beliefs (Schein, 1992: 12), which is distinct from, albeit linked to, norms of behavior and social structures.

I have raised a number of cultural considerations in this literature review, which I will include in my empirical enquiry and its analysis such as:

- beliefs regarding implementation and the models of curriculum and accountability;
- involvement and political power in the decision-making process, e.g., top-down or bottom-up;
- acceptance of authority versus credibility;
- the role of interpersonal skills in leading, e.g., the persuasiveness of the middle manager; and
- the affective component to reculturing, i.e., feelings of trust and motivation which commonly lead to ownership of change, compared to feelings of fear, frustration, and even alienation, which often lead to resistance (e.g., Zembylas, 2003).

The Structural Dimension

The second underlying dimension to understanding these dilemmas is structural – including both social (e.g., roles, routines) and material structures, i.e., visible artifacts. Structuralists contend that change is not only a matter of reculturing in regard to pre-existing values, beliefs, and through the means of interpersonal skills (persuasion) or will. Change is also a matter of restructuring. According to Giddens (1984), structures are not determined and shaped by individual agents, as functionalists propose - and perhaps Fullan presupposes to some extent in his model of reculturing. These structures are established ways of doing things, which act upon - sometimes in enabling and sometimes in limiting - individuals' and organizations' agency. Giddens posits that these structures may also be changed by these very agents, given that humans always retain agency, i.e., the *"capacity to make a difference"* (1984: 14), even if it is sometimes very limited.

Spillane et al. suggest that material artifacts and organizational tools represent *"defining components of practice"* (2001: 26). For example, different forms or protocols of teacher evaluation, and related organizational structures, such as morning instructional meetings, do more than *"simply 'affect' what school leaders do"*; they are *"constitutive of their practices"* (Spillane et al., 2001: 26). While the morning meetings create a space and time for collaborative planning to take place, such factors do not determine that practice. It was the principal, in this example, who decided to establish such meetings. On the other hand, organizational - especially material - resources such as time, professional development activities, and physical facilities all have a large financial component and are, often to a large extent, externally influenced, if not controlled (Spillane, 2006). I point to the prevalent norm of autonomy commonly found in secondary schools' subject departments, which often leads subject leaders to feel that they must act as buffer for departmental colleagues. I contend that such norms are not surprising, given that *"departments are bounded (by their) location in a hierarchical school structure"* (Wise, 2001 in Bennett et al., 2007, 457). Indeed, the structural separation by department - both in the curriculum and often in the physical plant - often breeds a sub-cultural *"territorialism"* (Bennett et al., 2007: 457).

Role is a relevant example of social structure making an impact on agency. In the case of many middle managers, as previously elucidated, their role's boundaries are rather fluid and often blurred. I suggest that the boundaries are naturally this way because these roles are often newer and less recognized and less important than, for example, that of the head of school. Moreover, schools are complex organizations and curriculum

is continually in flux; and the current neo-liberal pressures to re-norm have only exacerbated this confusion.¹⁵ Indeed, according to much literature, middle managers often suffer from ‘role conflict’, in which incompatible views of their role are held by different stakeholders, e.g., senior managers and departmental colleagues (Wise, 2001: 340). Such predicaments seem to limit severely middle managers’ agency, when there are such high expectations for this role in the implementation of school improvement reforms.

The larger ontological point relevant to this study relates to the interactive, interdependent nature of leadership and, in turn, the study thereof. Leaders do not work directly on the world. Leaders’ actions in and on the world are mediated by artifacts, tools, and structures of various sort. Hence, investigations of leadership practice must investigate leaders, “*acting in conjunction with mediational means*” (Wertsch, 1991: 33). Leadership practice is a product of this interaction (Spillane et al., 2001: 26). Accordingly, consideration of these different structural dimensions would be helpful in understanding and, perhaps, managing these dilemmas in an effective way. If there are to be changes in these norms of belief and behavior, there must be a change in structures – both social and material, and vice versa (e.g., Stoll, 1998, Hargreaves, 1997, Hannay and Ross, 1999).

I have raised a number of important structural considerations in this literature review, which I will include in my empirical enquiry and its analysis such as:

- the physical facilities and its organization, e.g., by discipline,
- the leadership roles created, and the interaction between those in these roles,
- meeting and planning time,
- accountability mechanisms,
- professional development structures, e.g., workshops, trainers, materials, and
- financial resources.

¹⁵ Studies have shown that where the pressure to change is heavy and the pace of this change rapid, workers often revert to pre-existing norms and traditional role-playing boundaries (Ogawa and Bossert, 1997).

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on middle management, as well as on fundamental and emergent concepts related to coordination. The purpose of this review has been to develop a general conceptual foundation for analysing coordination in the implementation of curriculum reform. This foundation is based upon the notion of organizational dilemmas and the consideration of both cultural and structural dimensions in analysing how coordinators seek to exert agency, and manage such dilemmas. I now proceed to examine the MYP context, curriculum, and leadership model in order to produce a research framework for analysing coordination specific to the implementation of the MYP.

Chapter Three: Context

Introduction

I wish to situate this enquiry in a useful context: to understand not only the design of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) curricular framework and its leadership model but also the programme's underlying purposes, as set out by the International Baccalaureate organization (IB), and to do so with reference to the wider educational landscape. This exercise will provide me a clear set of reference points for my subsequent investigation of how MYP is implemented and coordinated in practice, and in terms of its relevance to the larger context.

In this chapter I address each of these dimensions. First, I look at the genesis and historical development of the IB to distill core values underpinning its mission and major considerations shaping its programmes. Second, I study the MYP curricular framework to understand its philosophy and principles, its implementation expectations, and, in particular, its disciplinary and interdisciplinary components. Finally, I examine the leadership model to explicate key roles and responsibilities, which the MYP sets out for the programme's coordination. As the IB operates in a wider educational context, it is helpful to understand the forces at work here. Throughout this chapter, therefore, I consider the extent to which the findings of the literature review and its conceptual framework, including dimensions of the neo-liberal agenda, are present in the design of the IB programmes, particularly the MYP, and its various components.

I. The Origins of the International Baccalaureate

***Genesis and Historical Development*¹⁶**

To understand the special appeal of the IB in today's world of international education, one must go back to its seminal development in Geneva in the 1960s. The International School of Geneva (ISG), which was established post-World War One as part of the League of Nations, had a two-pronged mission. First, ISB sought to prepare the children of the League's - and later, the United Nations' - international diplomatic corps for post-secondary education, presumably in universities in their home countries (Walker, 2000: 193). Second, ISG aimed to instill in these students an appreciation of diversity, peace, and justice worldwide, as well as a personal sense of altruism, as they went out into the world. The fulfillment of this aim would, therefore, contribute, in however small a way, to the development of an international citizenry that would never allow the atrocity of world war to occur again. The dual emphasis on rigorous academic preparation and global citizenship was fundamental to this community's development of its programme for its international student body.

ISG went on to spearhead the development of an international curriculum. ISG developed courses international in scope, such as world geography and world history. Up to this point, however, the only formal curricula and secondary credentials recognized by governments and universities worldwide were strictly national. So, with the ISG as its driving force, a committee of representatives from a number of major international schools, called the International Schools Association, developed a standard international curriculum for seventeen to eighteen year-olds, i.e., students in their last two years of secondary school. The IB Diploma Programme (DP) was formally introduced in 1970 (Hill in Hayden et al., 2007). Subsequently, the Middle Years Programme, for eleven to sixteen year olds, was launched in 1994. The Primary Years Programme (PYP), for those students under the age of eleven, was established by 1997. Today, the IB is singular in offering curricular programmes from early childhood to secondary school graduation that were created from "*first international principles*". Such origins differ from a national programme either exported, e.g., American Advanced Placement, or adapted,

¹⁶ This section is based on research found in Robertson, 2004.

e.g., International Advanced Placement or International General Certificate of Secondary Education and Advanced International Certificate of Education from Cambridge. These IB principles also differ from an integrated programme, drawn from a number of national curricula, e.g., European Baccalaureate (Hayden et al., 2003: 206-207).

The emergence of the IB organization as the pre-eminent international education programme has been inextricably linked to international schools. In this seminal stage of international education development, two important elements were shared by a number of international schools which emerged as major IB DP flagships. First, the student bodies were internationally diverse. Second, a commitment to the ideal of peaceful coexistence through international understanding was central to their mission.¹⁷ This characterization certainly applies to ISG. It is a description that also applies to the United Nations International School, founded after World War Two with the creation of the United Nations and its headquarters in New York. These two elements are also present at Atlantic College, the first of the United World Colleges, erected in Wales in 1962, and offering an education to students selected by national committees as outstanding ambassadors of their home countries.

Another significant stage in the development of international education stems from the rise of the global economy and multi-national corporations. Over the last few decades, it has been the international business community, more than the diplomatic community, which has sought international education in order to support the needs of the children of its internationally transient employees (Walker, 2000: 72). As such multi-national corporate families have moved around the world, a breed of student has emerged, called 'the global nomad' or 'third culture kid', to indicate lack of rootedness in a home country.¹⁸ In response, international schools have been established around the world, with an emphasis on meeting both the need for nurturing students' personal and cultural identities (Pearce, 1998) and the need for a competitive, transferable educational credential (Cambridge, 2002: 158). The IB programmes have sought to address these two needs in addition to promoting peaceful coexistence through international understanding and

¹⁷ For example, George Walker (2002: 129) cites the mission statement of United World Colleges, which states its main aim as being to "*encourage young people to become responsible citizens, politically and environmentally aware, committed to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation*". Ian Hill (2002: 21) cites such an emphasis at the United Nations International School.

¹⁸ For discussion of issues related to global nomads and international education, see Langford's (1998) 'Global Nomads, Third Culture Kids and International Schools' and McKillop-Ostrom's (2000) 'Student mobility and the international curriculum'.

global citizenship. The IB has sought to address these needs by ensuring a holistic pedagogy and a credential that facilitates global mobility, particularly with the DP acting as *“an international passport to higher education”* (Hill in Hayden et al., 2002b: 19). These core elements are represented explicitly and implicitly in both the IB Mission Statement and the IB Learner Profile, which *“define(s) the type of learner the IBO hopes to develop through its programmes”* (IBO, 2006: 1).¹⁹

The IB in the Wider Educational Context

The development and growth of the IB, particularly the DP, I aver, has certainly been influenced, if not shaped, by neo-liberal forces – albeit more as a consequence of global economic forces than as part of any national agenda. Certainly international schools of the latter stage, as described above, have been more *“market-driven than ideology-driven, in the way that those of the earlier period had been”* (Mathews, 1989a and b in Gellar, 2002: 31). I challenge Matthew’s terms of reference here, as I view ‘market-driven’ as also being a sort of ideology itself. I interpret ‘ideologically driven’ as that which is based upon progressive, i.e., holistic, internationalist, ideals, such as those identified previously in this section. More importantly, I argue that the DP is a manifestation of this dominant neo-liberal trend in a number of respects. Although the DP is certainly more than a blunt testing instrument, I have established that it was created, on one level, as a product to meet the needs of the global economy’s elite. It is a product which is prescribed and held to account by standardized, quantitative measures - externally-set examinations graded according to one set of international standards. The DP certainly represents a *“gold standard”* in the competitive market of post-secondary education - albeit not the only such credential, e.g., British Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (Lauder, 2007: 441). The DP has been used as a lever in the implementation of school improvement policies in a variety of post-welfare contexts, especially as a means of enhancing positional advantage for upper and middle class families (Lowe, 2000).

¹⁹ See the IB website, <http://www.ibo.org>, for the IB Mission Statement and IB Learner Profile.

It is important to note that, while this brief history has perhaps oversimplified the development of international education, it has not only been market forces which have informed its genesis; there have also been strong pedagogical considerations and internationalist values. In seeking to meet the personal and socio-cultural needs of students around the world, the aims of international understanding and global citizenship have always been of great importance in the IB programmes. It has certainly not been a case of exclusively one mission or the other at any stage of development - such approaches are rarely seen in their pure forms. Rather it has been a matter of emphases playing themselves out in these dual aspirations. Cambridge (2002: 160) describes it as a “*reconciliation*” of “*internationalist*” and “*globalizing*” approaches, “*(each) unique to the historical, geographical and economic circumstances of that institution*”.²⁰ Moreover, the community of schools offering the IB has grown over forty years in both size and heterogeneity, reaching well beyond the so-called ‘international schools’. Today IB programmes serve approximately 840,000 students in 3,500 schools worldwide (IBO, 2010).

In this first section, I have shown that - in seeking to meet the needs of students and schools across the world – both neo-liberal (i.e., pragmatic, market-driven, globalizing) and progressive (i.e., idealistic, pedagogically-based, internationalist) forces have shaped the distinctive and highly-sought set of programmes that the IB offers today. How these dual aspirations are manifested in schools’ MYP implementation will be an important consideration in the enquiry’s empirical phase.

²⁰ For an analysis of globalization and its relationship to international education, see Cambridge’s ‘International schools, globalization and the seven cultures of capitalism’ (2000: 179-190) or Walker’s ‘International education: Connecting the national to the global’ (2000: 193-204).

II. The Middle Years Programme Framework

I now turn to the MYP framework. Along with an account of its origins, I will introduce a number of its key components as set out in MYP literature:

- its curriculum model in the IB Continuum,
- its philosophy and pedagogical principles, and
- its expectations for implementation.
- I will also locate the MYP within the wider education context, particularly as it relates to the aforementioned neo-liberal and progressive approaches.

I will examine the MYP framework as it is explicated in the MYP guides: *Implementation and development of the programme* (2000), and its successor, *From principles into practice* (2008). It should be noted that I refer more to the former than the latter guide, as this is the guide which my data sources themselves used almost exclusively up to the time of this enquiry. I draw also upon my own professional experience and understanding for some parts of this section because of the dearth of robust literature on the subject.

Origins

Like the DP, the MYP was created by the International Schools Association. The motivation came from teachers internationally who felt that a continuum should extend beyond, i.e., below, the last two years of secondary schools, particularly in promoting international-mindedness (Hill in Hayden et al., 2007: 29). Its curricular foundation was developed in large part by a number of francophone state schools in Quebec as well as by international schools in The Netherlands, Argentina, and elsewhere. The IB, with its pre-existing infrastructure, agreed to take over this curricular initiative of International Schools Association in 1992, making it available to schools and their students between the ages of eleven to sixteen, as of 1994. The collaboration between national schools and international schools in developing the MYP framework contrasts with the singularly international school origins of the Diploma Programme. Certainly, issues relating to the

suitability of the IB in national, as well as international school, contexts will be addressed in the empirical phase of this enquiry.

The MYP Curriculum Model in the IB Continuum

The MYP appears both to embody the IB mission and to contribute towards building an IB continuum in preparing students for the DP. I describe the curriculum model as a 'cross-breed' of the DP and the PYP, incorporating both disciplinary and interdisciplinary elements. While the MYP was created as a unique programme of its own, it is well suited also to *"naturally follow the PYP and (to be able to) serve as excellent preparation for the DP"* (IBO, 2000: 1). The MYP curriculum model fits well into the continuum of IB programmes. The MYP shares the IB principles of *"educating the whole person, emphasizing the importance of a broad and balanced education"* (IBO, 2000: 1). The MYP also aims to promote *"international understanding, responsible citizenship, and the importance of learning how to learn, student-centred inquiry and communication"* (IBO, 2000: 1).²¹ The DP has a disciplinary structure, with its six subject groups from which students choose courses²². The design of the PYP is primarily trans-disciplinary, in drawing on different subjects to construct thematic units of inquiry²³. The MYP incorporates both disciplinary and interdisciplinary elements in its framework.

On the one hand, the MYP retains an underlying disciplinary structure, requiring students to fulfill discrete objectives in each of eight subject areas.²⁴ Indeed, in preparing students for the DP, the MYP appears to share, at least to some extent, the element of disciplinary accountability. This element may not be quite as strong an emphasis as it is in the DP. The DP offers externally-set, internationally standardized examinations based on a

²¹ The MYP's fundamental concepts are: intercultural awareness, holistic education, and communication.

²² The six required subject groups of the DP include: humanities, a first language, a second language, mathematics, an experimental science, an art or another course from the other subject groups. An additional required course, Theory of Knowledge, is unique to the DP in its emphasis on examining different disciplines' ways of knowing (IBO 2008b: 10).

²³ The six PYP transdisciplinary themes are: who we are, where we are in place and time, how we express ourselves, how the world works, how we organize ourselves, and sharing the planet (IBO 2008b: 9).

²⁴ The eight required subject areas of the MYP are: arts, humanities, a first language, a second language, mathematics, physical education, sciences, and technology.

largely prescribed syllabus, upon which students are graded in order to earn points towards a diploma; whereas, the MYP does not. The MYP, however, does require schools to submit samples of assessed student work according to the prescribed subject specifications, i.e., aims, objectives, assessment criteria, and tasks.²⁵

On the other hand, the MYP was also designed for students to acquire a more global view. The MYP aims for students to grasp the interrelatedness of different areas of knowledge, and to understand by application the relationships between these areas both on a personal and global scale (IBO, 2002: 5). Connections between subjects and, more importantly, between learner and the world are to be made through five common or global themes, known as areas of interaction: approaches to learning, community and service, environments, health and social education, and human ingenuity.

This dual emphasis of the MYP curriculum model - on promoting the progressive values of the IB and on preparing students for the high standards of the DP - is present in two additional ways. First, the personal project, a year-long, culminating initiative, offers a student-centred approach and seeks to develop independent research skills. This project serves as excellent preparation for the DP's subject-based requirement, the extended essay. Second, the MYP's promotion of community and service establishes a strong foundation for the DP's extra-curricular requirement of creative, physical, and service activities, reflecting an IB core value of nurturing responsible global citizenship.

The MYP Philosophy and Pedagogical Principles

The MYP is a different programme from the DP in that its philosophy and pedagogical principles were designed with the profile of an early adolescent in mind. A student entering the MYP at age eleven often comes from a largely singular experience at the primary school, i.e., one main teacher, classroom, and an integrated learning experience. An MYP student leaving the programme at age sixteen requires preparation in a variety

²⁵ The subject-based samples are then moderated in order for students in their last year of MYP to be eligible for an MYP Certificate. If schools do not offer MYP certificates and, therefore, participate in this yearly moderation, they are required to participate in a form of moderation (known as 'monitoring of assessment') as part of their evaluation process, which occurs every four to five years.

of discrete disciplines for the next stage. By contrast, a student in the final years of secondary school seeks above all disciplinary preparation and the accompanying credential to allow successful entry into a post-secondary institution and one of its specialized faculties. During the early adolescent phase of the Middle Years, students typically move from a middle school to a high school. Perhaps most importantly, a student during these years is in a *“critical phase of personal and intellectual development”* (IBO, 2002: 3).

In order to accommodate this major shift in curriculum and context, as well as the many adolescent changes, the MYP model offers a *“broad and balanced”* framework, which emphasizes a distinctly progressive approach in a number of substantial ways (IBO, 2000: 12). First, the MYP offers a framework which, to a large extent, invites each school to devise its own curricular pathways for guiding students through this crucial, inherently turbulent stage of life and education. Certainly the MYP offers pedagogical principles to guide this curriculum development:

- attention to the whole child, i.e., including affective, cognitive, creative, and physical considerations;
- a focus on attitudes, skills, and concepts, as well as knowledge;
- the inclusion of varied teaching and learning methods; and
- the provision of varied assessment strategies, i.e., formative, summative, teacher-led, peer, and student self-evaluation (IBO, 2000: 9).

The MYP, moreover, prescribes particular subject-specific elements, including aims, objectives, concepts, and assessment criteria. The MYP’s emphases, nevertheless, are curriculum creation - or adaptation, where curriculum already exists - and coordination as school-specific processes. Such planning is expected to occur vertically, i.e., with a focus on students’ disciplinary development across the five years of the programme. Such planning is also to occur horizontally, i.e., with a focus on the areas of interaction across all subjects for each year of the programme (IBO, 2002: 13).

A second way in which the MYP is decidedly progressive in nature is that an underlying pillar of its pedagogical framework is ‘holistic education’ – a broad concept which has come to be interpreted in many different ways. The MYP literature identifies holistic

education as one of its fundamental concepts. The MYP's holistic approach aims to provide students with the opportunity to make connections through the areas of interaction - between their subject courses, the world around them, and themselves as learners (IBO, 2002: 5). Holism, as an educational philosophy, appears to place high value on the whole child, *"the all-round development of each individual – mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility and spiritual values"* (UNESCO, 1996 in Hare, 2006: 302). Holism also places high value on the integration of knowledge, seeking to

transform the way that we look at ourselves and our relationship to the world from a fragmented perspective to an integrative perspective. (Clark, 1991 in Hare, 2006: 302)

"Relationships, interconnectedness, genuine caring and community" become emphases, according to Hare (2006: 306), so that

the student is positioned as an active, participatory and critical learner who perceives and understands him/herself in a changing world and in a variety of local and global scenarios. (p. 302)

A constructivist, student-centred inquiry process is inherent to this holistic approach,

in which the student develops an understanding by consciously learning how to learn and linking new knowledge to existing knowledge. (IBO, 2002: 4)

Theorists such as Gardner, Perkins, Wiggins and McTighe have figured prominently as influences in the development of this educational philosophy in the MYP (IBO, 2002: 4). In many ways, this pedagogical model has commonality with and, indeed, builds on that

of the PYP.²⁶ For example, each PYP grade team of teachers is expected to plan one unit of inquiry for each of its six trans-disciplinary themes, within which students are given the opportunity to engage according to their own 'burning' questions (IBO, 2008b). MYP teachers are expected to plan both disciplinary and inter-disciplinary curriculum units using the areas of interaction, which, in turn, are to act as lenses for teachers to generate guiding questions for the unit. These teacher-generated guiding questions are intended to be conceptually-based and sufficiently open-ended as to allow students to make both personal and global connections in producing culminating work which expresses their own understanding of the unit (IBO, 2008a: 74). The units, for the most part, and the criteria used to assess them, nevertheless, are subject-based.

The MYP curriculum model appears to take an ambitious, somewhat complex approach, which attempts to infuse holistic and constructivist elements into both disciplinary and interdisciplinary structures, i.e., units and learning experiences. While Armstrong (2000) and Hare (2006) argue that holistic education has been poorly defined within the MYP, the MYP has, since the time of their critiques, developed more guidance in terms of specific pedagogical strategies, as cited above.²⁷ How effectively this progressive approach of holism translates into meaningful practice in different MYP schools – particularly with disciplinary demands to fulfill also - will be one aspect for consideration in this empirical enquiry.

MYP Implementation: Flexibility, Accountability, and Professional Development

It is readily apparent that the MYP does not offer a 'one-size-fits-all' product to be imported into any school, whatever international setting. On the contrary, in addition to its 'broad and balanced' pedagogical framework, the MYP offers flexibility in the logistical configuration of the programme. The IB has sought to ensure that the MYP is adaptable to different settings, given the variety of physical and curricular constraints. Where it is not possible for schools to offer all five years, schools can be granted exemptions. For example, proximate middle and high schools can be permitted to partner in order to offer the full length programme. Schools only able to offer two to four years of the programme

²⁶ See Bechtel and Waterson, 2002: 2-3.

²⁷ Such strategies have drawn upon the work of the above-noted theorists, especially Wiggins and McTighe.

and without suitable partner schools can also be considered to run stand-alone programmes (IBO, 2007: 21-22).²⁸ Some schools have difficulty scheduling the fifty hours required in each of the eight subject areas in each of the final two years. Such schools may be exempted from offering a maximum of two such areas in these years (IBO, 2007: 22).²⁹ The IB organization also acknowledges that curriculum aims, content, and assessment can often also be dictated by local or regional authorities and seeks to accommodate such realities (IBO, 2000: 23).

While the MYP offers breadth, balance, and flexibility, there are, nevertheless, also elements of professional accountability. In order to become authorized to offer the MYP and then pass regular evaluations every four years, schools must meet a set of standards and practices set out by the IB. These standards and practices pertain to philosophy, organization, curriculum, and the student experience (IBO, 2005b). Schools are judged according to the evidence both encountered by IB representatives in a two day visit to the school and in curriculum documentation. A minority of schools may have matters to be addressed that are serious enough either to delay or prevent authorization. In the main, however, the approach to authorization is one of self-appraisal and constructive guidance (IBO, 2006b: 2).

I would describe the MYP approach to accountability and professional development as set out in its guides as complementary and based on the principle of 'collaborative partnership'. This approach focusses upon the elements of self-evaluation and improvement, and collaboration and sharing of best practice - not only within the school but also in the larger community of IB World Schools, whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. The relationship between authorized schools and the IB is depicted as being a *"two-way relationship, through which the programme develops at the school and on the international level"* (IBO, 2000: 5). Rather than being a top-down agent of prescription and inspection, the IB evidently sees itself as a supportive change agent, offering constructive feedback through authorization and evaluation visits, as well as the

²⁸ For example, some middle schools begin at age twelve, i.e., grade seven or year six, rather than at age eleven, i.e., grade six or year five.

²⁹ This requirement is often a challenge where increasing number of option courses crowd the academic calendar, sometimes making it difficult for schools to offer the required fifty hours per subject area and/or to offer students the opportunity to take courses in all eight subject areas.

subject-based moderation reports. For example, the programme evaluation visit aims to be

diagnostic and constructively critical, supporting the school's self evaluation processes, informing the school's curriculum development activities, and assisting effective management and allocation of resources. (IBO, 2005a: 1)

At the same time, the IB organization expects MYP schools to be honest in its participation in self-evaluation. The IB depicts the programme, both within schools and within the larger organization, as *“evolutionary, requiring adjustment and development in the light of experience”* (IBO, 2005a: 1).

The way in which the IB purportedly treats teachers and coordinators has been aptly described – albeit as a brief and singular reference - as fostering *“creative professionalism”* (D. Hargreaves in IBO, 2006: 4). Hargreaves (1998) has defined this term in such a way as to promote more evidence-based best practices being prescribed. The IB has applied this term somewhat differently. I will use this term henceforth as the IB has applied it. I.e., the IB expects MYP schools to find creative pathways for adapting the MYP to their local settings (IBO, 2000: 18). The IB also expects MYP practitioners to share ideas and practices with others in the larger IB community through, for example, professional development workshops, sub-regional associations, and the online curriculum centre, and to consider becoming workshop leaders, guide-writers, school consultants, and evaluators (IBO, 2000: 5).

The MYP in the Wider Educational Context

The MYP framework appears in many respects to seek to balance, with progressive elements, the dominant neo-liberal approach to education encountered around the world today. This framework does contain elements of accountability. The MYP has a fundamentally disciplinary structure, and emphasizes the subjects in terms of prescribed aims, assessment criteria, and accountability mechanisms, e.g., moderation. Certainly, in

comparison with the DP, however, with its externally-set, subject-based examinations which emphasize student performance and at least implicitly teacher accountability, the MYP framework represents a more progressive model. The emphasis is on self-evaluation, collaborative partnership, and creative professionalism more than on external standards; and qualitative, locally adaptable, and open-ended process more than on quantitative, prescribed product. For teachers, the holistic philosophy, the constructivist, interdisciplinary curriculum planning, and the authorization and the evaluation phases all reflect this emphasis. The extent to which schools and their leadership teams are able to balance these neo-liberal and progressive elements, as presented in MYP guides, will be a major focus of the empirical phase of this enquiry.

This section on the MYP curriculum framework sheds light on the essential – and, at times, complex, even nebulous - elements of implementation. This examination will serve as a valuable reference for understanding these elements in the empirical phase of this enquiry, as they are encountered by MYP coordinators in their varied settings.

III. The MYP Leadership Model

Much education literature points to the critical value of leadership for the successful implementation of a pedagogical framework and provision of its curriculum, e.g., Fullan (2001), Stoll and Fink (1996). Such leadership would seem to be particularly important in implementing this challenging cross-breed programme of the MYP. Skilled leadership would likely be required in order to strike the balance between neo-liberal and progressive elements, particularly between accountability demands and opportunities for professional discretion and local adaptation. I now focus upon the MYP leadership model as it is presented in the MYP guides³⁰, seeking to understand key roles, incumbent responsibilities, and structural implications.

³⁰ I have referred primarily to the guide, *Implementation and development of the programme* (2000); secondarily to its successor, *From principles into practice* (2008); and tertiarily to the *MYP coordinator's handbook 2007-2008* (2007), which delineates the more technical aspects of the programme and its coordination, and is updated annually.

Senior Management

It is clear from these guides that senior management, including the school's head and governing body, must play a prominent role in MYP implementation. There is an expectation to lay a solid foundation for this implementation. First, the school, i.e., its senior management, must *"adhere to and promote the principles and fundamental concepts of the MYP"* and *"ensure that the school's mission statement and philosophy are consistent with those of the MYP"* (IBO, 2000: 11). Second, the senior management must understand and commit to the substantial financial obligation involved with implementing and delivering the MYP. This obligation includes annual fees, professional development for staff, as well as occasional release time for teachers to participate in MYP curriculum committees and meetings (IBO, 2000: 11).

MYP Coordinator

Arguably the most important element for the school's senior management to ensure some degree of success with the programme is the appointment and support of an effective MYP coordinator. The MYP coordinator is charged with *"oversee(ing) the implementation and delivery of the MYP"* and is to act as the central link between all stakeholders: senior management, teachers, students, and parents, as well as the IB (IBO, 2000: 14-15). Accordingly, the MYP requires that the senior management ensure that a coordinator is provided with *"sufficient release time"* and *"appropriate equipment and support"* to carry out such responsibilities (IBO, 2000: 14).

While the MYP coordinator is identified as a *"leadership position"*, I could not determine very well from the guides either the specific priorities of the role or its essential nature (IBO, 2000: 14). The current MYP guide for implementation, *From principles into practice (2008)* provides less detailed direction in this regard than the preceding guide, *Implementation and development of the programme (2000)*. There is the broad summary of the coordinator's primary role, as set out above. There is also a stated emphasis on communication with various stakeholders, including the presentation and promotion of the programme and the organization of regular meetings. The description of the

coordinator's responsibilities, however, reads like a laundry list of administrative duties. The list includes the general, such as procuring appropriate resources for both students and staff, including professional development opportunities. The list also includes the technical, such as "*organizing internal assessment, the standardization of internal assessment according to MYP criteria*" and the submissions for moderation or monitoring of assessment (IBO, 2000: 14). Duties also involve the minute, for example, "*notifying the accounts department of IBO payments due*" (IBO, 2000: 15). Teacher support and the accompanying interpersonal skills are touched upon (IBO, 2000: 15). It is, however, only in the *MYP coordinator's handbook (2007)* where there is any reference, albeit brief, to pedagogical leadership as being central to this role (IBO, 2007: 6).³¹ There is, moreover, in the *Implementation and development of the programme* guide (2000), the disclaimer that its long list is: "*neither exhaustive nor prescriptive*"; and, that it will vary

depending on the number of students, the type of school and the general management structure. It is therefore not possible to provide a job description for MYP coordinators which suits all schools. (IBO, 2000: 14)

The extent to which the breadth and malleability of the coordinator's role is an advantage or a disadvantage in practice will be an important consideration in the empirical phase of this enquiry.

Shared Leadership

I note an emphasis in MYP guides on the value of shared leadership for successful implementation. This concept seems to be described in a very similar way to that of 'distributed leadership' (see pp. 29-30), a concept which is popular in practice and research. 'Shared leadership' is frequently referred to both explicitly and implicitly. For example, the *Implementation and development of the programme* guide (2000) includes the general statement that implementation requires "*a high degree of communication and collaboration between staff*" (p. 13). This guide also states that success "*depend(s) on*

³¹ The *MYP Coordinator's Handbook (2007)*, as has been noted, primarily presents an itemized catalogue of explanations of all technical components, e.g., all requirements to run the programme, so is mostly irrelevant to this study.

the willingness of teachers and administrators to work in teams" (IBO, 2000: 17); and that the MYP coordinator's leadership must be supported by *"the entire management and teaching team"* (IBO, 2000: 14). The MYP, moreover, recommends such leadership be the responsibility of an *"educational"* (i.e., leadership) team. This team would typically include a senior manager, the MYP coordinator, subject leaders, and areas of interaction leaders.³² The team's focus is to be on *"both long-term strategic planning and short-term planning"* (IBO, 2000: 16). The team is to solicit contributions from all stakeholders in addressing four key areas:

1. school management and structures;
2. curriculum review;
3. communication, staff training, and development; and
4. strategic planning for MYP long-term development (IBO, 2000: 22-24).

The aim is *"a consensus for vision, participation, commitment and action"* (IBO, 2000: 22). Suggested items which this leadership team would plan include:

- development of an implementation timeline;
- detailed implementation plans for the personal project and the areas of interaction;
- budget proposals;
- formatting of curriculum documentation;
- planning of staff professional development; and
- organization of meeting and communication structures, including vertical and horizontal planning (IBO, 2000: 23-24).

I find that the MYP expects much creative professionalism from the school's MYP leadership team. The curricular model prescribes only subject aims and objectives, which are largely skill based. This model places emphasis on curriculum creation (or adaptation where curriculum already exists) and implementation as a school-specific process. The MYP leadership team must, therefore, be very creative in devising its own pathways for fostering *"small-scale initiative between teachers, flexibility in curriculum*

³² Areas of interaction leaders are charged with the coordination of the integration of the areas of interaction into the curricula. Based on my experience, these positions are usually allocated according to area, across the grades, e.g., MYP environments leader. These positions can also be allocated according to grade, across the areas, e.g., grade six areas of interaction leader. MYP teachers usually take up these roles as an extra responsibility, sometimes with a small stipend or release time being provided.

delivery, and dialogue between departments and individual teachers” (IBO, 2000: 18).

The ways in which and the extent to which these creative pathways are developed by school leadership teams will be an important consideration in the empirical phase of this enquiry.

Organizational Challenges

In my analysis of these published expectations and based also on my own experience, it is evident that strategic planning is largely reliant on powers beyond the MYP leadership team and coordinator. Whatever creative proposals come from this team’s strategic planning are highly dependent on the structural support and management style of the senior management (IBO, 2000: 13).

It is apparent that senior management must be actively involved and particularly resourceful to address the many organizational challenges of MYP implementation – in terms of timetabling, staffing, local and regional requirements, and funding. Timetabling challenges include providing the required fifty hours per subject area per year of the programme. Senior managers must also ensure that common meeting time is facilitated for both horizontal and vertical planning - which is particularly difficult with a middle school/high school partnership. Staffing challenges include compliance, especially with the extra time and effort MYP implementation surely involves. Senior management must also establish key MYP leadership roles: MYP coordinator and areas of interaction leaders, which the IB strongly advises creating for effective interdisciplinary and horizontal planning. Subject leaders are also crucial to ensuring that subject-specific requirements are fully addressed in the vertical planning of MYP. Challenges regarding local and regional requirements include reconciling those aspects which conflict or at least are difficult to integrate within the MYP framework, e.g., assessment systems, course and time requirements, standardized testing. In addition, all of the preceding challenges have a large financial component, which presents its own challenges, e.g., staff release time, workshop training, the provision of subject-specific resources.

Further Analysis

From my analysis of the published MYP expectations regarding the coordination of MYP implementation and from my own experience, I identified organizational challenges which emerge where external expectations meet local organizational realities. The MYP guides leave much to be determined regarding key implementation priorities. Such a leadership model does, however, allow for professional discretion in the school's adaptation.

Successful MYP leadership apparently requires much creative professionalism, particularly from the coordinator and senior management. The MYP team must lead the implementation of this ambitious, cross-breed curriculum by establishing pathways which can effectively overcome the many organizational challenges to be encountered.

Important considerations in the empirical phase of this enquiry will therefore include:.

- how these creative pathways are developed by schools' MYP leadership teams;
- how local organizational realities affect MYP implementation; as well as
- the roles, relationships, and the extent to which the coordinator and senior management collaborate in this endeavour.

The role of MYP coordinator, in particular, is not well defined. In my analysis, however, this position has much responsibility for leading the programme's implementation and, yet, little formal authority or power. The MYP coordinator is centrally positioned in seeking to balance the accountability demanded of teachers with their professional support and development. This role must also balance the prescribed elements with the locally negotiated and adapted in order to ensure that implementation of this ambitious programme is successful. External accountability, however, resides with the IB and internal authority and accountability with senior management. It appears that whatever power the MYP coordinator has must stem from whatever interpersonal skills he or she can employ. These skills must be utilized to establish collaborative relationships with teachers and the MYP leadership team members, as well as in enlisting the support of senior management to affect the required structural changes and together devise effective pathways. A primary focus of this enquiry will be on elucidating the profile, functions, and approaches that MYP coordinators do take in their school settings in seeking to strike this balance and lead the MYP implementation effectively. The extent to which the MYP's broad and flexible framing of the coordinator's role is an advantage or a disadvantage in practice will also be considered.

IV. Summary

In this chapter I sought to provide a useful context for this enquiry by introducing three topics section-by-section. In each section, moreover, I elucidated the ways in which and the extent to which both neo-liberal and progressive approaches were present. For each topic, I will now summarize key points.

1. The Origins of the IB

I showed how the development and growth of the IB were driven and shaped by both neo-liberal *and* progressive elements. The programmes, therefore, aim to ensure accountability according to high international, subject-based, standards and, at the same time, seek to embody educators' aspirations to meet the developmental needs of students across the world. I asserted that both approaches have figured prominently to make the IB programmes distinctive and highly sought. How these dual aspirations are manifested in schools' MYP implementation will be an important consideration in the enquiry's empirical phase.

2. The MYP Curricular Framework

I examined how the MYP curriculum model was designed in the IB continuum as a cross-breed of two approaches. The MYP combines prescribed disciplinary demands along with progressive expectations of interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation, and adaptation according to local needs. I have found that both approaches are significantly manifest in the MYP's design, albeit with slightly more of an emphasis on the latter progressive approach. The programme also demands accountability, while nurturing professional development. This complementary approach is based upon the principle of collaborative partnership, in which the IB organization and MYP schools develop the programme and improve practice together. Accordingly, the MYP seeks to foster creative professionalism in participating schools. MYP practitioners are expected to find creative pathways to implement MYP elements in their schools and take leadership opportunities both within

their schools and on behalf of the IB organization. The extent to which schools and their leadership teams are able to fulfill these ambitious aims and balance these approaches will be a major focus of the empirical enquiry.

3. The MYP Leadership Model

I examined the MYP leadership model, including the roles of coordinator and senior management, the principle and framework for shared leadership, and the inherent organizational challenges of implementation. I found there to be an implicit emphasis on creative professionalism in order to address such challenges and balance the accountability demands and the opportunities for local adaptation. This emphasis was particularly important in the collaborative efforts of coordinator and senior management. The role of MYP appears to be crucial, despite its lack of formal authority, for ensuring successful implementation. These dimensions of the MYP leadership model: organizational setting and inherent challenges, creative implementation, the coordinator and other leadership roles, their relationships, as well as the underlying issues of power, accountability, and professional support and development – will all require examination in this enquiry's empirical research.

V. A Research Framework for Analysing MYP Coordination in the Implementation of MYP

It is important to integrate the key aspects of the MYP implementation and its coordination, as distilled from this chapter's examination of MYP guides, with the conceptual framework, as derived from the previous chapter's literature review. Such a synthesis will provide me with a research framework for analysing MYP coordination in the implementation of the MYP - one that should be sound in its basis and practical in its applicability to my empirical study. This research framework is comprised of four sets of themes and research questions. For each set, below, I have explained, in summary form, its rationale based on the synthesis of the two preceding chapters' findings.

I. School Setting: *What has been the effect of the school setting on MYP coordination?*

From my literature review I discerned that leadership is often viewed as distributed and, indeed, a product of interaction with material and social structures. Based on my examination of MYP guides, key structural considerations for MYP implementation include the organization of the programme as well as resources (e.g., material, financial, personnel). I will, therefore, consider such components in a variety of school settings and analyse their effect on MYP coordination.

II. Implementation: *What have been important features of MYP implementation?*

In this chapter, I showed MYP to be an ambitious cross-breed of disciplinary and interdisciplinary elements with an emphasis on vertical and horizontal collaboration for successful implementation. In the previous chapter, we saw that facilitating collaboration is difficult, particularly when it is initiated externally, as has often been the case in the current neo-liberal context. Interdisciplinary work is especially difficult in subject-based schools, both in terms of structure, e.g., roles, forums for planning and execution, and in terms of culture, e.g., staff expectations and associated affective aspects. The enquiry will focus upon such challenges of implementation and how they are handled by coordinators.

III. Coordination: *What have been key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP?*

It is evident from my review of the relevant literature that the role of middle manager, especially that of subject leader, is important for the successful implementation of school reform. There are, however, often conflicting expectations for this role. On the one hand, there are expectations to be an instrument of senior management and prescribed, i.e., neo-liberal, school improvement measures, e.g., by facilitating improvement through collaboration and evaluating subject colleagues. On the other hand, middle managers are also expected to be loyal to their teaching colleagues and their professional norms and act as mentors to these colleagues. Such expectations also create tensions between

middle managers' authority and legitimacy. These tensions can be difficult to handle and demand sophisticated interpersonal skills, e.g., influence, persuasiveness, and political astuteness.

MYP coordinators do not appear to have the exact same role conflict as many subject leaders, i.e., the former usually do not evaluate teachers. Coordinators, however, must mitigate the same kinds of organizational dilemmas. According to its guides, MYP coordinators are charged with finding creative pathways for implementing this curricular cross-breed of disciplinary and interdisciplinary elements. Such coordination involves balancing neo-liberal accountability measures with professional support and development and a more progressive orientation. While the role of MYP coordinator is broadly defined, it involves primary responsibility for the programme's implementation without much formal authority. According to the espoused principle of shared leadership, coordinators need to be effective in collaborating with teachers and enlisting the support of senior management and the IB – both in terms of resources and authority.

The primary focus of this enquiry will be on elucidating the profile, functions, and approaches that MYP coordinators take in their school settings in seeking to mitigate such organizational and curricular dilemmas, to manage the accompanying structural and cultural challenges, and to lead the MYP implementation effectively. In doing so, I will also be considering the underlying tensions between culture, structure, and agency to this role.

IV. Accountability and Professional Development: *What have been important features of MYP accountability and professional development and what have been their impact on MYP coordination?*

In my literature review, I identified the organizational dilemma between managerial and professional forms of accountability as central to understanding the coordination of curriculum reform, particularly in the current neo-liberal context. The IB and its MYP, in my analysis of its underlying purposes and curricular framework, seek to balance the two forms. The MYP does prescribe key curricular requirements, to which the IB holds

schools and their staff to account; it also, however, provides much local flexibility and seeks, foremost, to be a supportive change agent to schools' self-evaluation, professional development, and improvement. Indeed, this complementary approach is rooted in a two-way relationship in which the MYP framework is adopted and adapted in schools which, in turn, informs and shapes the IB's further development of this curriculum. I described this approach as collaborative partnership. The MYP seeks to foster creative professionalism – a term rarely used in IB publications but nevertheless very apt. Practitioners are expected to find creative pathways to implement MYP elements in their schools and take leadership opportunities both within their schools and on behalf of the IB organization.

I will examine features of MYP accountability and professional development and their impact in MYP schools – and the extent to which the elements of collaborative partnership and creative professionalism have been realized, according to MYP coordinators, in their settings.

Conclusion

In the previous chapter I reviewed literature relevant to MYP coordination: curriculum, coordination, middle management, collaboration and teams, and managerial and professional forms of accountability. On these bases, I produced a conceptual framework for analysing coordination in the implementation of curriculum reform, which underlined the main organizational dilemmas and their cultural and structural dimensions. In the current chapter, I examined the IB context, namely the IB origins, the MYP curriculum framework and leadership model, according to its publications. I then synthesized key aspects of both chapters to produce a research framework. This framework provides the four sets of themes and research questions for analysing MYP coordination in the implementation of MYP, as stated above. I will now present and analyse my research methods.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Introduction

In the following chapter I present and analyse my research methods. In the first section, I give an overview of the enquiry, describing its type, aim, themes, and research questions. In the second section, I offer a rationale, explain, and then analyse the design of this research enquiry. I provide this information in general terms, then according to the two stages of data collection – interviews and case studies. In the third section, I explain and analyse how I analysed the data, and present my research framework. I conclude this chapter by explaining the checks I employed in this research process in order to ensure its validity.

I. Overview of the Enquiry

This enquiry involves an empirical study in the field of educational leadership and management. This study examines one type of middle management role, that of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) coordinator. The research involved interviews with experienced coordinators and three school case studies.

Aim, Themes, and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to analyse the role of IB MYP coordinator in implementing the MYP in a variety of school settings. The four themes and accompanying research questions were informed by a review of relevant literature, in particular, relating to middle management and MYP. These themes and questions are the following:

1. School Setting: *What has been the effect of the school setting on MYP coordination?*

2. Implementation: *What have been important features of MYP implementation?*
3. Coordination: *What have been key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP?*
4. Accountability and Professional Development: *What have been important features of MYP accountability and professional development and what have been their impact on MYP coordination?*

II. Design of the Enquiry³³

This empirical study involved two stages. The first stage comprised semi-structured interviews with eight experienced MYP coordinators. The second stage included case studies of an international private, a national private, and a national public school. Each case study involved semi-structured interviews with the MYP coordinator as well as a number of others involved in MYP leadership at each school.

Methodical Rationale

I chose these qualitative methods given the nature of my topic and an underlying epistemological assumption. I understood from the relevant literature on middle management, curriculum implementation, and accountability, as well as from my own experience as an MYP coordinator, that the cultural dimensions of such elements as well as organizational dilemmas that they involved were complex and dynamic. Such a naturalistic approach reflects the assumption that research data is “*socially situated*” (Cohen et al., 2000: 267). I did not seek to capture an “*objective reality*”, which Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 2) assert can never be accomplished. I study these coordinators and issues in their natural, dynamic settings, attempting to make sense of phenomena in terms of the multiple meanings different people find in them. This method recognizes the subjectivity and “*embeddedness of social truths*” (Cohen et al., 2000: 184).

Interviews provide very good opportunities to access the richness and nuance that such complex social issues often bring with them. Such opportunities are not as readily available with quantitative methods (Cohen et al., 2000: 267). Indeed, experts in the field

³³ This section draws upon a small amount of research found in Robertson, 2003a.

of social science methodology, such as Oppenheim (1992: 81-82), recommend interviews over questionnaires for more difficult, open-ended questions. Interviewing allows me to explore ‘the how’ of leadership, as a dynamic context-dependent process, above and beyond ‘the what’ – which has been the prevailing focus of school effectiveness and school improvement (SESI) literature. As Stark and Torrance (2005) point out,

interviews offer an insight into respondents’ memories and explanations of why things have come to be what they are, as well as descriptions of current problems and aspirations. (p. 35)

A semi-structured format, moreover, offered flexibility. While I knew the broad issues I wanted to examine, this format allowed me to explore with the interviewees their context and experiences as they spontaneously remembered and reflected on them. Indeed, the issues I wanted to examine – coordination, curriculum implementation, and accountability - were so closely related, even overlapping, that it would not have been helpful to create a pre-determined, highly structured format. This format provided for discourse, in which I, as interviewer, could probe for meaning. Specific questions would spontaneously emerge during the interview after broader pre-set questions were used to introduce key topics. After each interview I could make adjustments in an attempt to improve the structure and the language with which I framed questions for the subsequent interview.

Rationale for the Case Study Approach

The decision to take a case study approach, as a second stage of my empirical study, was certainly reinforced by the relevant literature. The notion of shared leadership, as it is promoted in the MYP guide, *Implementation and development of the programme* (2000), is critical to understanding the role of coordinator in each MYP context. This notion has been, moreover, a key tenet in much of the empirical research in the field over the last decade, particularly in the form of distributed leadership studies. As one leading distributed leadership theorist, Gronn, states, leadership involves social interaction or “*concertive actions*” (2002: 429). As I identified in my literature review, it is helpful to understand leadership and school reform in cultural as well as in structural terms. I aver

that professional dilemmas between, for example, hierarchical and collegial loyalties, or directive and supportive approaches, i.e., professional vs. managerial forms of accountability, are better understood within this broad scope. Many prominent studies of such issues adopted the same method, including, for example, *The SSRC Cambridge accountability project*, led by John Elliot et al. (1981) and, more recently, *Managing in the middle: School leaders and the enactment of accountability policy* (2002), by Spillane et al. Ogawa and Bossert (1997) assert that studies of leadership should have the organization as their unit of analysis. Indeed, Ogawa and Bossert (1997) criticize views of leadership “that treat it as a quality that individuals possess apart from a social context” (p. 16). Bottery (2004: 116) contends that one gains a clearer picture of the forces at work by viewing from the meso level of the organization rather than from the micro level of the individual. I would go further and state that by subsequently viewing from the macro level, in comparing different case studies within the MYP world as well as in relation to the larger educational management field, one gains an even clearer view of the essential issues and their interrelation.

The strength of a case study is that it can take an example of an activity or an “*instance in action*” (Adelman et al., 1980: 72) and use multiple data sources, and often multiple methods, to explore it. Through multiple interviewees’ perspectives and an empathetic, interactive sharing, a “*thick description*” (Geertz, 1973) can be generated. By interviewing at least two middle and/or senior managers in addition to the MYP coordinator in each setting, I could gain multiple perspectives on curriculum implementation, accountability, and the related dilemmas. More importantly, I could better understand the role of MYP coordinator in relation to these roles, as I intended.

A case study approach is particularly well suited to exploring how a policy or programme is implemented *in situ*, and makes it possible to hold the programme to account in terms of “*the complex realities of implementation and the unintended consequences of the programme in action*” (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 33). Accordingly, this study of MYP coordination involved, first, an understanding of the MYP framework, its aims, and objectives as outlined in its guides. This study involved, second, an examination of how MYP leadership teams in their context interpreted these aims and objectives and were able to implement and adapt this framework to their organizational realities.

My Role

My dual role, as MYP coordinator and researcher of this role, offered both distinct advantages and challenges, particularly with this chosen method, interviews. On the one hand, my intimate knowledge of the programme and a number of its practitioners was a major asset. First, I have a wide network of contacts, having been MYP coordinator both in North America and in Europe and involved with the IB organization and its development and leadership internationally over the last decade. I could, therefore, draw upon my fellow MYP coordinators as interviewees. This collegiality was particularly helpful, since I was asking for their generosity of time. I was also asking for their openness, i.e., in sharing their leadership experiences, which often included sensitive, confidential information. Second, I have a familiarity and practical experience with the programme and the related issues of coordination, curriculum implementation, and accountability. Third, my store of tacit knowledge about these people and this community in which they operated gave me another advantage. I would more easily be able to make connections between interviewees' remarks and the larger contexts.

On the other hand, this dual role does pose some challenges, particularly with this method. While collegiality often engenders trust, it might also be considered an obstacle. In interview situations in particular, Cicourel (1964) claims, there is "*an inevitability of respondents holding back part of what it is in their power to state*" or conversely, sometimes giving what they might perceive to be socially-desirable answers in relation to the topic discussed (Cohen et al., 2000: 267). Collegiality, then, might compound this phenomenon, unwittingly causing a sort of peer pressure and distortion of the data. Being a practitioner also has potentially problematic implications for the validity of this study. In the analysis and interpretation of the data, for example, the researcher has significant influence on what part of the data will be reported and how (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). I was acutely aware of the challenge of being able to identify and loosen the hold of my pre-existing perspectives and biases in order to ensure a balanced and thorough process. In the concluding section, I discuss three checks on my research process designed to guard against such biases.

Methodology experts remind us of the impossibility of complete detachment. *“Researchers are part of the world they study”* (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993 in Hatch, 2002: 10). *“There is no way to escape the social world in order to study it; nor, fortunately, is that necessary”* (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993 in Hatch, 2002: 10). Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 15) go further in stating that *“the interpretive practice of making sense of one’s findings is both artful and political”*. If interviewing and the description and analysis thereof are, then, by nature partially subjective, i.e., value-laden; it is the act of reflexivity which is essential to the integrity of such research.³⁴

Organization of Interviews

I arranged interviews with eighteen individuals – eight in stage one and ten in stage two. Each interview lasted between one hour and two-and-a-half hours, sometimes over two sessions. Interviews took place between the years 2007 and 2009, partially during the school year and partially during vacation time. I chose to conduct each of my interviews either by phone or in person for practical reasons. Where person-to-person interviews were convenient, this was my method. More often, however, telephone interviews were more convenient. While telephone interviews might have been more comfortable for both parties, they did not allow me a chance to observe body language. Such interviews did, nevertheless, offer the chance to notice voice tone (Cohen et al., 2000: 279). I informed interviewees that the interview would be electronically recorded. I reassured all interviewees that the information they shared would remain confidential (see next section). By recording the information electronically, rather than taking notes, I could listen to responses without being distracted; I could then review and transcribe this information afterwards. There were, however, several exceptions, in which I had a series of shorter interviews, which were recorded through note-taking.

Ethical Considerations

As an insider researcher, i.e., someone who has a *‘dual role’* as both researcher and colleague to interviewees in the practice of MYP coordination, there is the potential danger of unwittingly neglecting a protocol in regards to ethical data collection (British Educational Research Association, 2004: 6). In my case, I was very deliberate in

³⁴ Merriam (1988: 26) describes reflexivity as the self reflecting critically on itself as researcher.

addressing such considerations and did so in accordance with British Educational Research Association (BERA) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004). While I had a well-established relationship with all interviewees, in which there was implicit trust and respect, I prefaced all interviews with the verbal assurance that I would use their information for this research enquiry with all attributions to individual interviewees and to schools being concealed, i.e., only made as a more general reference to role and region respectively. As mentioned above, I made the interviewees aware that I was recording interviews electronically and also storing it on my own personal computer. In turn, I sought verbal voluntary informed consent from each of these interviewees, with their right to withdraw being understood. In no case was there any question or initial apprehension about sharing such potentially sensitive information. In a few exceptional cases during interviews, however, interviewees articulated the importance of such confidentiality, given the sensitive nature of what they were sharing with me. In such cases I provided reassurance.

This approach to the ethics of my data collection was sufficiently systematic and transparent in meeting BERA guidelines. Most importantly, I am confident that the prime ethical concerns were satisfactorily addressed: the protection of subjects from harm (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) or, as Reynolds (1979) frames it more positively, ensuring the research participants' dignity, privacy, and interests are respected. There was, however, never anything overly formal about this process, nor, as noted above, was there any apprehension expressed by or detected from interviewees. On the other hand, it was certainly in the interviewees' power to withhold information which might have been valuable to my research but which they did not wish to risk sharing. Perhaps this approach speaks to the cultural context in which this study was conducted. The context was not British, even though this enquiry is submitted to a British university, the University of Bath; nor was the context Canadian, even though many of the interviewees are themselves Canadian, as am I. I would contend that this enquiry's research was conducted in an IB cultural context. This context, as the IB purports (in chapter three, e.g., p. 47) and my interviewees substantiate (in chapter five, e.g., p. 91), is rooted in the principle of collaborative partnership - between MYP schools, practitioners and the IB organization. The prevailing norm of practice is one of sharing of information in a number of forms, whether via reference materials, exemplars, formal consultation or informal discussion. By extension, the underlying norm of belief is one of inherent trust and respect for one another's work relating to this curricular venture. I would assert that this understanding and *modus operandi* are applicable to this research project, especially given the pre-existing relationships I had with all interviewees through our common MYP

work. According to Hollingsworth (1991), such a collaborative spirit is not uncommon in educational research settings in which the researcher is also a colleague with those being researched.

Selection of Interviewees

Sampling is a key ingredient in the design of the empirical research. *“Factors such as expense, time and accessibility frequently prevent the researcher from gaining information from the entire population.”* (Cohen et al., 2000: 92) In making the decision of how best to represent those involved with MYP coordination, I choose a non-probability sample over a probability (or random) sample. In particular, I was primarily purposive in targeting experienced MYP coordinators, in both stages. This feature allowed me access to those who had implemented the programme over a number of years and, so, could provide longer-term and potentially more meaningful reflection on key elements I wished to study. The coordinators I chose were involved in the programme within their schools as well as with the larger IB organization. Such broad-based involvement allowed me a chance to ask them about their perceptions of the MYP programme and its implementation beyond and, indeed, in comparison to the case of their own school. While such choices involved sacrificing to some extent the representativeness of my sample in terms of the wider population of MYP coordinators, it allowed me much more insight into MYP coordination on the school and (IB) organizational levels, which I very much sought. In stage two, I also used purposive sampling in my choice of case studies. I had determined that MYP schools could be classified into one of three categories based on two important features: funding and governance (and its accompanying accountability mechanisms). Accordingly, I selected one case study for each of the following: an international private, a national private, and a national public school.

In choosing my subjects for both stages, there was a degree, at least secondarily, of convenience sampling. Ease of access factored into my decision of whom I interviewed in stage one, and which schools I studied in stage two. I could, nevertheless, justify these choices in terms of their value to my research. First, by interviewing people and contexts I already knew, I came with background knowledge and an immediate rapport. Second, the fact that I drew upon Canadian sources more heavily than others in terms of origins of interviewees and school settings certainly did not skew the representativeness of such a sample greatly, given the high concentration of MYP schools in this country. Nevertheless, generalizability was not my chief aim, given the modest size and purposive nature of my research. The greater intention was to examine deeply issues which arose

from my review of relevant literature. My choice of samples allowed me to tap potentially rich sources of such information. I am, therefore, confident this intention was achieved.

I explain below the parameters and the accompanying rationale for the design of each stage of data collection in further detail.

Stage One Interviews

Process

I began my empirical research process by contacting several MYP coordinators, with whom I had worked internationally over the last decade, to set up telephone interviews. I was confident that my prior relationship would allow me to connect with and understand the experience and expertise of their role as coordinators in implementing the MYP.

Interviewees

Interviewee 1 worked as teacher and coordinator as a prominent Canadian national private school which has all three IB programmes. While he has continued to lead MYP workshops, he no longer works at an MYP school.

Interviewee 2 acts as coordinator of MYP as well as of the rest of the school's curriculum. She works at a prominent Canadian national private school which has all three IB programmes. She has recently stepped down as part of the MYP sub-regional association's executive.

Interviewee 3 was MYP coordinator at a European international private school. He has been an MYP workshop leader and a member of a number of MYP guide-writing teams and other committees, and is now a principal at a European international private school.

Interviewee 4 has not only been involved in MYP coordination and senior management roles in schools in the Middle East and central Europe but has also been at the centre of

MYP development in various roles at the IB curriculum and assessment centre located in the United Kingdom. He is now managing an IB-related business.

Interviewee 5 is MYP coordinator at a national private school in Canada. She has presented at numerous workshops, has been a representative on one IB MYP committee, and has taken a leadership role in contributing to one of IB's current initiatives.

Interviewee 6 was MYP coordinator in two different international private schools in two different continents. He has led numerous regional workshops and participated in several MYP guide-writing committees. He is currently a senior manager at a long-time, prominent MYP school in Europe.

Interviewee 7 is currently an MYP coordinator in a large national public school in the United States, whose school exemplars have been featured in several of the MYP's recent guides. She is also serving on one of the IB's worldwide committees.

Interviewee 8 has acted as coordinator at two urban national public schools in the U.S.. Amongst numerous IB leadership experiences, he has been an MYP workshop leader as well as a contributor to several recent MYP working committees.

Stage Two Case Studies

Process

In each case I interviewed the MYP coordinator first. I then interviewed at least one manager in a senior position to the MYP coordinator, one usually to whom the coordinator directly reported³⁵; and at least one other middle manager in a parallel or junior position to the MYP coordinator, e.g., IB Diploma Programme (DP) coordinator, subject leader. I note the absence of area of interaction leaders interviewed in the case studies, which might be considered a significant weakness given that MYP guides identify these as potentially key roles in the leadership of MYP implementation. This absence,

³⁵ This was not the case with the international school case study. I spoke briefly to both the middle school and high school principals. Both principals, however, left their positions during my research phase, so I was unable to arrange a full interview with either of them.

however, reflects several important realities relating to my data sources. First, only one of the schools chosen for case study had AOI leaders. And it turns out that the SL I chose to interview from this national private school had, in fact, taken on some AOI leadership responsibilities at an earlier stage of the MYP implementation. Second, the international private school I chose to study had not yet introduced these leadership positions but aimed to do so soon after its authorization. Third, the national public school had AOL leaders at an earlier stage, but did no longer. Many interviewees indicated the inefficacy of such positions for the successful leadership of MYP implementation, as I explain in more detail later in this enquiry (see p. 146). Such data sources need not be literally reflective of any role set, especially since such a role set is not prescribed by MYP nor is it found to be present in all schools. More importantly, interviews with leaders on a parallel or junior level to the MYP coordinator were merely intended to provide a tertiary perspective, valuable for the purposes of triangulation in terms of examining coordination in MYP implementation in different school settings.

Common Parameters

In choosing the schools I would study as my cases, I sought several common contextual features. I chose schools whose staff I already knew, at least to some extent. This familiarity provided me the knowledge to determine each school's suitability for my study. This familiarity also provided me an extensive, i.e., longer-term and detailed, background for understanding the relevant issues in each case. The personal connection provided me greater ease of access for interviewing relevant personnel.

All of my interviewees' schools – both those in stage one and in the stage two case studies - had adopted MYP after establishing the DP. Many of their schools also had the Primary Years Programme in place. I considered the fact that these schools had more than one IB programme as an indication of their long-term investment in the IB. In terms of the validity of the data, it seemed likely that interviewees who worked in a school with multiple IB programmes would have a depth and breadth of IB expertise and experience and could provide a valuable comparative perspective between the programmes.

I chose schools which had implemented the MYP for at least three years and had already become authorized by the IB. This parameter ensured that the schools had implemented to the stage at which the IB organization could judge whether they were successfully fulfilling IB requirements, principles, and practices. In turn, having completed this initial phase of MYP implementation allowed MYP leaders a sufficient opportunity to reflect in a deep way.

I interviewed staff members in schools in which they were primarily drawing upon the original implementation guide, *Implementation and development of the programme* (2000), and supplemented by the subsequent and current implementation guide, *From principles into practice* (2008a), in their schools' more recent MYP development. By ensuring all schools were basically drawing upon the same implementation guidelines established an important baseline not only in terms of my analysis of theory and practice but also in my comparison between case studies.

The schools I chose to study were all located in North America. On a practical level, the choice reflected my own move back to North America, after having worked in International Schools in Europe for almost a decade. My most recent and immediate interactions were with schools in this region. I would argue, furthermore, that the selection of North American case studies reflects the concentration of MYP growth. The majority of MYP schools worldwide are found on this continent. Indeed, Quebec is the region most densely populated with MYP programmes worldwide, and United States is the country with the most MYP growth and the largest number of MYP schools currently (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2010).

Different Contexts

Through my initial interviews of a broad spectrum of MYP coordinators and on the basis of my own experience, three categories of MYP school settings emerged. These categories related primarily to the schools' external accountability settings as well as their source of funding. The first category was comprised of schools I classify as 'international private schools'. These schools were not only international in the sense of the diversity of its population but were also exclusively externally accountable to an international accrediting body or bodies, most prominently the International Baccalaureate Organization. These international schools were private so derived their financing chiefly from students' parents paying tuition fees. Their board of governors usually consisted largely of these parents.³⁶ The second category was comprised of schools I describe as 'national private schools'. These schools share with international private schools the same financing and governance arrangements. National private schools, however, are different from international private schools in that they are not only accountable to the IB but also to the regional government's department of education, hence must reconcile these two sets of expectations. I identify a third category of schools as 'national public'. These schools are financed and governed by their regional government, with a local, publically-elected or appointed school board installed as well. National public schools are held externally accountable primarily by their regional government's department of education and secondarily by the IB. It is on the basis of these distinctions in accountability and financing that I chose which schools would be investigated further as my three case studies.

The presentation of these three case studies is helpful in representing different types of MYP school settings which can then be compared and contrasted. Indeed, as I will argue in my subsequent analysis of these case studies, variations in accountability and material resources make a significant difference in the programme's implementation. Comparing such differing accounts can serve well to illuminate the underlying issues. Moreover, each of these case studies and its key features are likely, to some extent, generalizable across a number of MYP schools worldwide. The limitation of such a case study approach, however, is that it does not allow for generalizing statistically from this limited number of cases to the population of MYP schools as a whole. Stake (1995) has argued

³⁶ For a systematic treatment of the issue of what constitutes an 'international school', see, e.g., Hayden, 2006, pp.9-20.

that the case study method, nevertheless, offers the opportunity for “*naturalistic generalization*”, in which readers “*recognize aspects of their own situation and experience in the case and intuitively generalize from that case*” (in Stark and Torrance, 2005: 34).

I submit that the case studies I have chosen provide a rich and thoroughly researched set of data. For example, case study two features a national public school partnership, including one of the largest high schools in this province of Canada. This region has a very high concentration of MYP schools. I interviewed four members of the MYP leadership team, all of whom has extensive experience in leadership roles on behalf of the IB organization. These interviews were approximately six hours in total duration. In addition, I have worked very closely with these four individuals and had come to know their schools quite well before this enquiry.

Case Study Interviewees and School Settings

Case Study One: An International Private School

This study focuses upon MYP coordination at an international private school, through interviews with the school’s MYP Coordinator (MYPCO), DP Coordinator (DPCO), and a Subject Leader (SL).

MYPCO was coordinator in both a European and a North American school. He led international workshops for the IB and for the Harvard Graduate School of Education and participated in a number of MYP guide-writing teams and other committees. He is now a senior school principal at a European international private school. DPCO has also worked in a variety of schools internationally and has led a number of DP workshops. SL has extensive experience teaching both MYP and DP English and Humanities. Since my initial interviews, SL has moved into the role of MYP coordinator. SL is currently doing graduate work related to professional development and has led workshops at the Centre for the Advancement and Study of International Education.

This international private school is located in the U.S.A. It was established as a non-profit entity in the 1980s by *“a group of parents, international educators, and members of the business community whose aim was to provide the (city) area with the kind of international educational opportunities found in major cities throughout the world”* (website/admissions/school profile). The school offers IB programmes throughout, from kindergarten to grade twelve. Students in the primary school follow a dual language curriculum, with alternating days of English and one of German, French, or Spanish. Secondary students have opportunities to continue to take a few of their subjects in a second language, thus allowing them eligibility for a bilingual IB Diploma upon graduation.

The school's student population currently numbers over nine-hundred and is very diverse, representing over sixty countries. Approximately half of the students are nationals and half are foreigners. Only thirty percent of the students come from families with two American parents and only sixty percent speak English at home. The faculty is similarly diverse, representing over thirty countries. Socio-economically the student population is much less diverse. Tuition fees are just under \$US 20,000 per year. The secondary school, which contains middle and high school divisions, has approximately three-hundred and fifty students and forty-five staff involved in the MYP, grades six to ten. The school's MYP is a fully inclusive programme (i.e. includes all students at these grade levels).

The school is accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS), a regional association of colleges and schools, and the IB. The school is also recognized by and receives support from a number of federal governments. Its middle and high schools are not, however, bound by any local, regional, national or international programme requirements other than those of the IB. Its curricula and assessment system are designed according to IB aims, objectives, criteria, and grading scales exclusively. The school gained MYP authorization in 2008.

Case Study Two: A National Private School

This study focuses upon MYP coordination at a national private school through interviews with the school's MYPCO, the Director of Studies (DOS), and an SL.

MYPCO is an MYP science workshop leader and school trainer. In addition to coordination responsibilities, MYPCO recently gave up her part-time teaching in order to take up the role of Assistant Head, Middle School. DOS previously worked in both teaching and management roles in a large public school system, as well as a major university faculty of education in a large urban metropolis in central Canada. Amongst many leadership experiences, DOS has published and presented internationally on assessment and evaluation. SL has recently retired from this school and is now acting as a consultant and workshop trainer for MYP technology.

This independent, i.e., non-profit, school is for students from four to eighteen years old. It has been in existence for over eighty years and has an established, prestigious reputation. The school caters to families of high socio-economic status, with tuition fees over \$CAN 25,000. Situated in a large Canadian urban centre, it draws primarily upon mid-town neighbourhoods nearby. With a small boarding section, there is also a significant proportion of international students attending, especially Asians. The upper school comprises grade seven to grade twelve, ages thirteen to eighteen, with approximately four-hundred and fifty students and sixty staff involved in the MYP, grade seven to ten. Grades seven and eight comprise the middle school section within the upper school, which is in a separate building to those in grades nine to twelve, who are in the high school section. The MYP is a fully inclusive programme, meaning all grade seven to ten students participate.

Case Study Three: A National Public School

This study focusses upon coordination of a joint partnership MYP involving a middle school (MS) and a high school (HS) in a national public setting. I interviewed the one

middle school MYP coordinator (MSCO), the two high school MYP coordinators (HSCO1, HSCO2), as well as the high school principal (HSP).

HSCO1 has been active as executive president of the province's IB sub-regional association, DP coordination workshop trainer, and school consultant. HSCO2 is currently the president of the provincial MYP sub-regional association and also an MYP science workshop leader. MSCO was also actively engaged in the IB sub-regional association but has recently moved schools. She is, therefore, no longer involved with MYP. HSP has presented at IB workshops and conferences internationally on the role of IB school head. HSP has just retired from his school board.

The Canadian suburban community in which these two schools are located is socio-economically mixed, mainly middle class, and ethnically diverse, with a sizable south Asian immigrant population. The two schools are located about one and a half kilometers apart, with the MS being the most immediate 'feeder' school to the HS. In each school the MYP is offered exclusively, i.e., as one stream or school within the larger school for selected students. In the MS, which comprises grades seven and eight, the MYP was integrated into the pre-existing French Immersion stream, with approximately one-hundred of the four-hundred students participating, i.e., fifty students in two classes per grade. In the HS, the MYP in grade nine and ten is part of the 'IB stream', so leading to the IB Diploma in grades eleven and twelve. The IB stream is one of five different schools within this school, which is the largest HS in the region. There are approximately four-hundred and twenty of one thousand three-hundred grade nine to ten students enrolled in the IB stream, i.e., two-hundred and twenty students in eight classes per grade, and approximately forty-five teachers who teach at least one MYP course. Within the five different schools at the HS, courses are offered at six different ability levels, from vocational to advanced, as sanctioned by the regional department of education.

III. Data Collection and Analysis

The original themes for this enquiry emerged out of my review of the IB context and MYP guides, other relevant literature from the field of educational leadership, as well as my own pre-conceptions, as an experienced MYP coordinator. These themes were: curriculum coordination, implementation, and the related issues of accountability and professional development. Table 1, below, presents the evolved, final, and more detailed research framework, which includes key issues and questions for each theme, as this framework was used for data collection, description, and analysis.

Interview Schedule

My early attempts to develop an interview schedule based on these issues posed some challenges. I put great care and invested much time in generating, grouping, and sequencing a great number of questions. I sought to ensure that the questions were neither leading nor overly biased, and aimed to maximize the potential for eliciting rich data. I include in Appendix A the original (or pilot) interview schedule (pp.192-193). After my first two interviews, nonetheless, I realized there was never sufficient time to ask all intended questions, numbering over thirty. Those questions I managed to pose rarely came out as they were originally formulated or sequenced. Each interview unfolded differently, each time according to the unplanned dynamic of the interview itself.

After these first two interviews – which I considered my pilot interviews - I decided to make two changes. First, I decided to reduce the number of questions, particularly ones relating to the interviewees' educational and teaching background. I found this topic personally interesting but very time-consuming and not sufficiently central to the conceptual framework to which my literature review had led me. The second change to my interviews was one of approach and sequencing. I decided to embrace a more natural or organic approach to interviewing. I realized that the wording and sequence of the interview questions and the number of these questions answered were not nearly as important as ensuring interviewees addressed the key issues relating to their MYP implementation. Moreover, the coherence and integrity of each interviewee's account was to be respected as much as possible. I therefore began interviews by asking about

interviewees' introduction to IB and MYP, and their transition into the role of coordinator and the school's first steps of implementation. While this approach elicited initially a chronological account of their experiences, it often eventually led to meaningful self-reflection and analysis by the interviewees. According to my original interview schedule, by comparison, I spent a disproportionate amount of time on the initial phase, asking participants about their educational and teaching background. I then proceeded rather abruptly into asking interviewees about MYP coordination and about their leadership style. Only after this phase did I address issues of implementation, accountability, and professional development. After my first few interviews, I concluded that this sequencing of questions seemed unnatural and impractical.

With these two changes, I became increasingly confident that relevant data would emerge. I could always sort the data according to the key issues after the interview and, where I was lacking or unsure of the data. I could also conduct a follow-up interview – which I did with those first few (pilot) interviewees. At the same time, my repertoire of questions evolved further in my attempt to glean data on MYP implementation and coordination. I include both the revised interview schedule (Appendix B, pp. 194-195) and an excerpt of an interview transcript based on this revised interview schedule (Appendix C, pp. 196-198).

Two important dimensions emerged from these interviews which led me to a second stage of data collection, case studies. The first dimension which featured prominently in the interviewees' accounts was the relationship between MYP coordinators and their senior managers. The literature review had shown that middle managers such as SLs were not only directed by their senior managers but were very dependent on them for material resources as well as authoritative support. Moreover, as I examined the issues of accountability and professional development, I discovered the extent to which coordinators' work and their roles were defined in relation to the senior management. Second, I had identified some of the organizational challenges in my earlier analysis of the MYP leadership model. Subsequently, through the first stage of interviews, I came to understand more deeply the significance of a school's context with particular regard to resources and external accountability. In order to provide a further exploration of these two dimensions and their role in MYP implementation, I decided to proceed with a set of case studies. The interview schedule itself required only slight adaptation.

My Research Framework

Table 1 presents my research framework, which evolved, as noted above, as I collected the data. The framework was used for data collection, description, and analysis for both stage one interviews and stage two case studies. This framework is structured according to the following themes, key issues, and corresponding research questions.

Table 1: Research Framework

<i>Themes and Key Issues</i>	<i>Research Questions</i>
<u>School setting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of the programme • Resources • External accountability 	<i>What has been the effect of the school setting on MYP coordination?</i>
<u>Implementation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural barriers • Cultural barriers • Interdisciplinary opportunities 	<i>What have been important features of MYP implementation?</i>
<u>Coordination</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile of the coordinator • Function(s) of the coordinator • Function(s) of the senior manager 	<i>What have been key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP?</i>
<u>Accountability and Professional Development (PD)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability and its impact • Areas for improvement of PD • Strengths of PD • Coordinator's involvement in PD 	<i>What have been important features of MYP accountability and professional development and what have been their impact on MYP coordination?</i>

Process of Data Analysis

This data collection process, as described above, has been evolutionary in regards to interview schedule, stages of enquiry, and the research framework. Moreover, this process reflects what grounded theorists label as ‘theoretical sampling’, in which *“subsequent data collection should be guided by theoretical developments that emerge in the analysis”* (Punch, 1998: 167). As I began collecting the data, I organized it according to themes and key issues, which in turn influenced the refining of my interview schedule. I coded the data from each interview by colour and then placed relevant parts of each interview transcript under the relevant themes - and key issues as they emerged.³⁷ In turn, my subsequent interviews began to incorporate more specific issues in my questions. As I proceeded with coding, I also undertook some ‘memoing’, which Glaser (1978) defines as *“the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding”* (pp. 83-84).

A third stage in this process of data analysis was that of abstracting and comparing. These two tasks were concurrent and, as I have explained above with regard to theoretical sampling, very much iterative. As Punch (1998) explains, *“comparing concepts and their properties at a first level of abstraction enables us to identify more abstract concepts”* (p. 209). For example, it was by comparing my stage one interviews that my research framework became more clearly defined in many ways. In particular, this comparison led me to the significance of the theme of school setting as well as key issues relating to the interaction of MYP leadership role sets. This comparison, by extension, led me to conduct the stage two case studies. This stage allowed me to make ‘analytic inductions’ (Ragin, 1994), especially regarding differences between schools in terms of MYP organization, resources, and external accountability systems.

³⁷ For illustration purposes, in Appendix C: Interview Transcript Excerpt (pp. 196-198), I colour-coded the interviewee’s responses according to research themes.

Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by reflecting on issues relating to the validity and robustness of my data set and research process. I begin with the data set. The depth and breadth of the interviewees' collective MYP knowledge are rare, particularly considering that the programme has existed for only fifteen years. Each of these colleagues has had long-term MYP experience in multiple, diverse and prominent roles. In addition to MYP coordination, this experience includes other leadership roles within their schools as well as those beyond their schools on behalf of the IB organization. There is also significant diversity geographically and socio-economically in these interviewees' MYP settings. It should, nevertheless, be noted that the majority of the interviewees drew upon experiences in private, i.e., tuition-charging, schools both in Europe and in North America; the minority were in public, i.e., government-funded, schools, in North America.

I now turn to the research process and its validity. The process of collecting, describing, and analysing data has been for me iterative in nature. In gathering and analysing qualitative data there are many subjective elements – in terms of what is of value to include, what meaning to attach to different information, how to interpret when there are many possible interpretations. Results can appear uncertain. Consequently, I employed three checks on the process: a vigilant self-reflexivity, progressive focusing and triangulation. First, as an interviewer, I increasingly sought to guard against “*impositional strategies*” which stem from the inherent power associated with this role (Barbour and Schostak, 2005: 42). I eventually accepted the dynamic “*messiness*” of the interview and let go of much of my pre-determined structure and sequence (Barbour and Schostak, 2005: 41). I allowed interviewees more opportunities to tell their stories and express their concerns, playing the role of listener

in a way that parallels the language and manners of the interviewee and does not impose or objectivize the person who is invited to speak. (Barbour and Schostak, 2005: 43)

When I did ask questions and make comments, I did so in a dialogical way. As a fellow MYP practitioner, I could relate to the interviewees' experiences, and so sometimes responded or prompted them, and, indeed, occasionally offered my own summary interpretation of their vignettes and views for their further feedback. Sochstak's emphasis on the *"inter"* of the interview resonated with me; the process was a *"critical reflective dialogue between people"* (in Barbour and Schostak, 2005: 43). Such an approach to interviewing required a *"vigilant self-reflexivity"* (Bourdieu in Barbour and Schostak, 2005: 43).

Second, as a researcher, the scope of data collection process was also iterative, starting broad and then going deep. I moved from an initial stage of interviewing a number of experienced MYP coordinators worldwide to a subsequent stage which featured a few distinctive case studies. Parlett and Hamilton (1972) describe this as *"progressive focusing"*, whereby the particular sites selected for detailed study emerge from an initial *"trawl"* and analysis of key issues (Stark and Torrance, 2005: 35). I came to see the holism of the case study approach as providing further opportunities for thick description as well as probing analysis – not only for *"understanding (each) case in its complexity and its entirety"* but also in *"its context"* (Punch, 1998: 154). A key ontological underpinning is that person, structure, and action are interdependent, though separable, elements (Archer, 1995, Spillane et al., 2001). Thus, I sought to examine leadership in its organizational context – in particular, according to accountability settings - where these components work in interaction.

Deciding to take a case study approach led me to a third check in the data collection and analysis process: data triangulation. By studying the MYP leadership from more than two distinctively different standpoints within each case study and across three distinctively different case studies, I had utilized a powerful technique for validating data through cross verification (Bogdan and Biklen, 2006) and *"map(ping) out and explaining more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior"* (Cohen et al., 2000: 112).

In the subsequent chapter I will describe the data I collected according to the research framework outlined in Table 1 above.

Chapter Five: Data Description

Introduction

In this chapter I describe the data collected in the empirical phase of this enquiry. This phase consisted of two stages of data collection: stage one involved interviews and stage two involved three case studies. Each of the four resulting data sets was organized according to themes and related research questions as follows:

I. School Setting: *What has been the effect of the school setting on Middle Years Programme (MYP) coordination?*

II. Implementation: *What have been important features of MYP implementation?*

III. Coordination: *What have been key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP?*

IV. Accountability and Professional Development: *What have been important features of MYP accountability and professional development and what have been their impact on MYP coordination?*

Each data set was then divided further according to sub-themes which emerged. These sub-themes were mostly consistent across data sets. There were, however, a few exceptions. Both commonalities and differences will be addressed in the subsequent data analysis chapter.

Stage One: Interviews

This section reports data obtained in the first stage of my empirical research from interviews with eight experienced coordinators. I have combined this data according to the themes listed above and relevant sub-themes which emerged. Further information about these interviewees and how they were interviewed can be found in 'Chapter Four: Methodology'.

I. School Setting

Organization of the Programme

Coordinators from public schools reported that the MYP was established in their setting between proximate schools within a school district, i.e., as a partnership between a middle school (grade six or seven to eight) and a high school (grade nine to twelve). These public schools often offered the MYP as a *“school within a school for gifted and talented students”* (7), i.e., for a minority of students who were accepted entry by proving a high academic standard of achievement. In the United States, in particular, the MYP and Diploma Programme (DP) were used in a number of school districts, *“as magnet programmes in low socio-economic neighbourhoods...to keep bright students and attract more”*. (7) These schools viewed these International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes as *“a valuable tool for getting district dollars”*, which, in turn, aided student success, teacher development, and school improvement overall (7).

Coordinators from private schools stated that their Middle Years Programme was usually located at a single site, i.e., campus, albeit sometimes in more than one building. The programme was *“inclusive”*, i.e., included all students at these levels (2).

Many interviewees noted how difficult bridging a Middle School with a High School was in terms of logistics: *“you’ve always got to remember – ‘oh yea, what about the high school?’”* (7).

Resources

Those public school coordinators whom I interviewed often found material and professional resources at best barely adequate in such settings. Release time from teaching responsibilities was often lacking for MYP coordinators as were professional

development budgets (7,8). This limitation was exacerbated by the logistical and, sometimes, political challenges of trying to coordinate the programme between partnering schools. In such, often large, schools, *“there was always turnover”* with many teachers, students and administrators moving into and out of the programme from year to year (7). Much of the public school’s MYP coordinator’s time and energy was typically spent on clerical tasks, and certainly staffing and timetabling were big challenges for each school’s principal (7,8).

External Accountability Requirements

In addition to the accountability requirements of the MYP, interviewees at national schools reported having regional requirements to fulfill (1,2,5,7,8). These requirements were often found to be bureaucratic “hoop-jumping” and, therefore, not professionally enriching (7). One coordinator reported that her staff found the combined assessment demands of the MYP and the national programme onerous at times (2).

II. Implementation

Aims

All interviewees found the implementation of the MYP a worthy endeavour. Not only does the MYP straddle the Middle and High School but *“it (also) attempts to address the needs of eleven year-olds all the way up to those of sixteen year-olds”* (4). One interviewee described MYP (as) *“a pedagogical tool and an organizational tool (for the school)”* (4). Another interviewee viewed the MYP as a *“vehicle for school improvement”* (8). One coordinator disclosed that, having DP beforehand meant that the MYP was trusted by parents as another strong IB programme (6).

Interviewees appreciated how such broad and ambitious aims made for challenging implementation. One interviewee compared the MYP to the other two IB programmes:

The PYP (Primary Years Programme) and its planner fit within the boxes of the elementary school. The Diploma provides a (curriculum) package for each senior subject specialist. The MYP, on the other hand, is everything to everyone. But it has to be flexible. It straddles the Middle School (MS) and the High School (HS), where teachers have very different views. It's hard to tell them to do the exact same thing. And the programme offers a solution – a big framework and an impetus for school to bridge the two. (4)

Structural Challenges

In some cases, the initiative to implement was top-down (i.e., stemming from the head of school and the board); in others, it was bottom up (i.e., teachers); and in yet others, the initiative was more organic and involved both management and teachers.

Some coordinators took advantage of the “*pre-existing subject-based school structure*” (4), emphasizing “*the disciplinary aspects in the initial stage of implementation before trying a few interdisciplinary initiatives*” (6). While the MYP challenges “*specialists to think beyond their territory and look at the whole child*” (5) and early enthusiasts felt that the areas of interaction were worthy vehicles for this interdisciplinary work, coordinators sometimes found it hard to provide meaningful guidance and structural support for teachers in this work (5). Meeting time for this collaborative work was hard to find, especially in (public) unionized schools (7,8); and

area of interaction leaders were never very effective. It was the nature of the beast; they often didn't know where to start and were rushed off their feet anyway. (6)

The interviewees did see varying levels of progress in overcoming the divisions both between subjects and between grades (and, indeed, in several public settings, between schools). Several interviewees highlighted the significant progress in their schools' vertical and horizontal articulation of the MYP (2,6,7).

Cultural Challenges

Coordinators understood that one important challenge of MYP implementation was building a collaborative culture, which, one interviewee explained, *“means giving each other feedback as well as support”* (2). Many high school teachers and, particularly, high school subject leaders expressed concern and some even exerted resistance (1,5,7). One such teacher proclaimed that the programme was a *“half-baked idea”* (6). One coordinator reflected on the challenge with high school teachers:

You can tell elementary teachers what to do and how to do it, but high school, it's like: ‘you can't tell me what to do’. (4)

Interviewees felt much of the resistance was about *“being uncomfortable without a prescribed curriculum”*, and *“being forced to be (collaborative) curriculum developers themselves”* (4). As subject specialists, *“they preferred to focus on disciplinary-based Diploma preparations exclusively”* (5). One coordinator recognized the dilemma as such:

If MYP was (sic) more prescriptive (like DP), would collaboration be lost? Yes, and that's the frustrating part of this programme. It's a catch-twenty-two. (5)

One former coordinator asserts:

The MYP is difficult to implement, not because it hasn't been thought through, but because it requires a lot of work, more than just in your subject. It requires lots of communication, experimentation. Once teachers overcome fears, (and) the initial difficulty, many like the freedom - moving away from textbook, setting curriculum, the freedom to construct something which they own. (6)

On the other hand, the same interviewee conceded:

(While) MYP is a process, not a revolution, it can look like one and people get tired of this. They want stability. So you try (as MYP coordinator) to keep people looking for new opportunities, trying things. (6)

III. Coordination

Profile of the Coordinator

In my discussions with interviewees about their professional experiences and development, several characteristics emerge. One characteristic is that they “*didn’t just accept status quo*” (5), they were curious (3) and willing to take a chance – in the new schools they moved to (e.g., international schools), in trying new ways to teach (e.g., less prescriptive, more interdisciplinary) and in taking on new, often unknown and untraditional, roles (2,4,5,6,8). Another common characteristic is their exceptional commitment to this admittedly “*difficult*” programme (6); a commitment which one described as “*an enjoyable, slightly obsessive, hobby*” (6) though another said “*is killing*” her (7). These practitioners describe themselves as “*resilient*” (1) and “*optimistic*” (3). One interviewee, however, reflected on his lack of this drive in his second experience of MYP implementation:

I loved doing it first time, but not so much the second time. As someone experienced, I didn’t push the limits. I knew what was possible and what was needed. I knew what was ahead, banged my head in frustration, and found it ultimately demoralizing. (6)

Coordinator as Guide Alongside

Because the programme is not prescriptive and, indeed, relatively young, coordinators must be prepared to improvise and act as lead innovator, willing and capable of “*producing models*” of innovation for teachers (3). They must not only be effective communicators but also “*visible, accessible, so teachers can ask questions*” (3). The role, according to interviewees, requires both a “*collaborative*” style and the ability to “*facilitate teamwork*” effectively (4). As one interviewee put it, a coordinator

should lead without appearing to lead, by not being directive or the sage on the stage, but by being a guide on the side and a role model as a teacher in the classroom. (5)

She continued:

I see myself as part of the teaching staff - not as part of the administration - and I'm seen this way by other teachers. (5)

One interviewee, who had acted as coordinator in two different settings, reflected that

to be an effective MYP coordinator you have to be young, risen through the ranks, seen as one of the gang, learning alongside others, doing what I (sic) was preaching. You have to be a lobbyist for teachers to management (for example, in asking for more money or people). (6)

He went on to regret playing the dual role of MYP coordinator (MYPCO) and Principal in his subsequent school: “*even when you provided exemplars it was not well-received when coming top-down, from the Principal*” (6).

Coordinator as Administrator

The role of MYPCO appears to have its drawbacks as a middle management position, based on interviewees' comments. One coordinator complained: *"A good deal of my time, day-to-day, involves paper-chasing and form-filling"* (7). Another coordinator regretted *"all the time (she) spends on (logistical) problem-solving"* and *"chasing people down"* (e.g., arranging meeting times)(2). This coordinator expressed a wish that, instead of such menial tasks, she could be *"going into classrooms and giving teachers constructive support and feedback"* (2). A similar observation was made by another coordinator:

all the clerical work means that I can't be in classroom forming bonds with teachers and promoting the cause more. (7)

One interviewee confided: *"sometimes the MYP coordinator can be seen as a nag, always asking for more curriculum documents"* (5). This point was reinforced by another interviewee:

There's a danger of it (MYP) being (viewed as) a sideshow - all (teachers) doing what we do, then there's this coordinator nagging us for this extra layer we have to fulfill – always more meetings, more documents. (4)

While coordinators understood that such managerial tasks are necessary, they did not enjoy them. They were also aware of how negatively this part of their role was sometimes viewed by teachers.

Coordinator as Facilitator

The place of the MYP coordinator was described as, *"in between subject leaders and the director of studies (and the rest of the senior management)"* (4). As such, the MYP

coordinator must “wear many different hats” and “build many relationships – with students, parents, the administration, teachers, department heads” (5). One interviewee described the title, coordinator, as apt:

They (sic) are the connective tissue of the programme - supporting the teachers, asking the administrators, promoting the programme in the community. The coordinator can't just lead. They (sic) have to set-up, facilitate. (3)

A similar comment was made by another interviewee:

They (the MYP coordinators) are usually the ones with the vision so they have to show the administration and the teachers where to fit in. If you're trying to build a community, a culture, you have to set conditions so it can work and you have to get administration to do this. There's a lot of pressure - you're the one responsible for the MYP progress. (7)

Senior Manager as Authority Figure

The role and approach of MYP coordinator were often defined by interviewees in relation to the coordinator's in-line or senior manager (usually the principal).

The MYPCO is a very crucial role. He must inspire, generate enthusiasm, even cheer-lead. But the person above them (sic) is critical for moving things forward. They (sic) can demand accountability from teachers. (3)

Another interviewee reinforced this:

I feel like a rat when I go above to the Principal when things don't come in or don't get done, but sometimes that's the only way. (5)

A third interviewee stated: *"They (the MS and HS principals) can make deadlines non-negotiable when I can't (as MYP Coordinator)" (7)*. The senior manager was described variously as *"the key power"* (8), the *"driver"* (5), the one with *"the big picture"* (1), and *"the bad cop"* to the MYPCO's *"good cop"* role (3). Interviewees almost uniformly spoke of the need for senior managers to take on a role of authority and enforcement. Some coordinators, however, felt that this was lacking in their school setting:

Our Middle School Principal needs to become more of a hatchet man, to make sure staff meets our IB expectations. I can't do a thing when they (teachers) just tell me they couldn't produce curriculum documents because they didn't have enough time. (7)

When I show teachers exemplars, they think it's a great idea. But then there's no follow-through and it just feels like it's a one person show. (1)

The principal should be the bad cop in principle, but it's not happening. (3)

There was, on the other hand, also an observation that, with the senior manager's authority, comes the potential support for the teachers and the MYP coordinator:

if you want to give Senior School teachers room to experiment (with the MYP), they need safety and assurance – and that's where the administration is needed. (6)

Some coordinators felt that, where senior managers did not call teachers into account, they wished their roles included it; and yet, they realized that likely would have a price:

It might make it easier to make things happen. But there is a downside. I'd be viewed as an administrator. So I wouldn't get the same level of respect. I'd lose that relationship. They (the teachers) like me 'cause they feel like I'm doing the best I can. They do things 'cause...oh, it's (interviewee's name)...and I get along with everybody. There's lots of goodwill. I'm seen as a colleague on the frontlines and I offer them my support. (5)

One interviewee recalls the case of a former coordinator:

She had a bruising style. She pushed staff for results. But it came at a steep cost. She had to move on to another school, where she took on a senior management role. (4)

Hiring, firing, and teacher evaluation were not part of any of the coordinators' roles; nor were such responsibilities sought. One said: *"it would undermine my role as go-to person"* (2). One coordinator interpreted the concept of authority as unrelated to such formal power: *"my authority comes from the knowledge I bring and the respect and trust I've built with them (teachers)"* (3). The general feeling shared by coordinators, however, was that they had *"lots of responsibility but little (formal) authority"* (3).

IV. Accountability and Professional Development

Accountability and its Impact

Accountability measures were a *"double-edged"* sword (3). On the one hand, there was much paperwork, so-called *"grunt work"* (5), to be completed by both coordinator and

teachers (in terms of their curriculum planning documents). One interviewee was quite frank:

Teachers hate paperwork. It's a time issue. They could be working with kids. They might jot down fabulous (unit planning) notes; however, they are not intelligible to the next person (i.e., their colleagues). There is only a small population who like to develop curriculum (documents). (3)

On the other hand, as one interviewee put it, *"(while) it made some (staff) grumpy, it made them deliver; staff rose to the challenge."* (5) Another interviewee commented, *"the pressure of the authorization visit raised the bar. All teachers came through above and beyond."* (7) Interviewees agreed that the authorization and evaluation processes were generally positive and very constructive. Many of the coordinators recommended moderation as an extra layer of accountability (1,3,5,6). *"The feedback was really helpful and you get the stamp of approval which parents and the administration like."* (6) The additional, significant cost attached, however, made this an unlikely option for those at public schools (7,8).

Professional Development

The model of a collaborative curriculum as a professional development (PD) process *was a negative and a positive for teachers: some see it as something else to add to their load, and others see as a great opportunity.* (5)

Areas for Improvement of PD

Many interviewees observed that the development process was a challenging one for most teaching staff: *"teachers want more direction"* (2). All interviewees found the expectations for implementation and the resource support were sometimes lacking. *"They still aren't great but they are getting better"* (6). *"The models (of best practice) are the way*

to go. *We just need more of them.*" (3) *"More off the shelf materials are needed"* (5). And yet, interviewees realized, the organization relies on schools to generate the exemplars of practice:

Cardiff³⁸ isn't so sure what this looked like until schools experimented. And there's no one school who (sic) has it all figured out. Few are doing a good job in all of them (i.e., aspects of the MYP). There's (sic) always things to work on. Cardiff just picks what's good from different areas (i.e., regions), different schools. (4)

A number of the interviewees emphasized how valuable outside pedagogical resources were for the MYP implementation, for example, Harvard's Project Zero and Wiggins & McTighe's Backward by Design (3,5).

The communication of implementation, authorization, and evaluation expectations was perceived to be improving (2,7). Some of the interviewees, however, still found there to be problems:

Communication sucks! Cardiff doesn't want to be prescriptive, but then it's too nebulous. And different messages are always going out from the IB - its staff, its workshop leaders. (5)

Cardiff is not really in tune with what was going on in schools. They haven't really thought it through. (4)

While, on the whole, interviewees reported general satisfaction with the MYP training workshops, there was some concern about the consistency of quality.

³⁸ The IB Curriculum and Assessment Centre resides in Cardiff, Wales.

They need better screening for workshops, so everyone has the same level of experience. Sometimes it's diverted by the agenda of (particular) participants. (1)

Interviewees suggested that coordinators' training should be less about the management of the programme. *"Although the practical nuts n' bolts are needed, there could be more on theory, pedagogy"* (3). One complained about the training for their principal (3). A couple of interviewees recommended that those in the MYP leadership team, whether MYP coordinator or senior manager, should attend a subject specific workshop to understand the programme on the teacher's level (1,7). When I offered the idea of workshops on change management and leadership skills for schools' MYP leadership teams, interviewees responded favourably. One interviewee replied: *"Exactly! It's about understanding how the coordinator can help teachers – and how the administration can help the coordinator"* (5). Another interviewee saw the advantages of getting *"the same info and figuring things out together"* (7).

Strengths of PD

On the other hand, *"coordinators appreciate the autonomy and flexibility of the programme"* (4). They realize the MYP *"can't be prescribed. Schools have to find their own way."* (6) That being said, having an experienced consultant assigned by the IB, as is the case in North America, to support this school implementation process was perceived as *"very helpful"* (3).

Having someone from the outside, I used her to get across key points I had been trying to make with my teachers. (5)

Moreover, workshops were sometimes also validating: *"people came back feeling like they knew way more than other teachers out there"* (2). Resources have improved and the IB is eventually *"responsive to needs. They're (sic) now providing workshops and materials according to your stage of implementation"* (5).

All the coordinators interviewed took advantage of the network of IB schools and fellow coordinators. One coordinator commented:

Sharing with other coordinators who were at the same stage helped me along in our journey. I realized that I wasn't the only one out there. There was a support network. We stay in regular touch. There's a strong bond. We solve problems together. There's a personal connection. (5)

Coordinator as Professional Developer

All the coordinators also took on some kind of leadership role(s) with the IB organization, for example, as workshop leader, Online Curriculum Centre (OCC) resource person, guide writer, authorization and evaluation team member. As one interviewee explained:

The MYP organization has always offered opportunities - constant invitations to be involved – and they need everyone to be involved. The good thing about IB: it's not really hierarchical. (7)

Another described the opportunity to become a workshop leader:

It was a huge perk. I wanted to advance. I don't always feel appreciated inside school but this was an outside outlet where I was very much appreciated. IB surprised me with the faith they put in me. (5)

The reward for one interviewee was “the connection with a huge network of like-minded people” (3). One coordinator commented:

It was really satisfying. It was great PD. A lot of reflection is involved as workshop leader. I have to synthesize good practice and review what's worked. As OCC faculty advisor, there are often questions without any pat answers, so it forces me to think things through myself. (5)

Stage Two: Case Studies

This section reports data collected in the second stage of my empirical research from three different cases studies. I have sorted each case study's data set according to the themes listed in this chapter's introduction and according to the relevant sub-themes which emerged. Further information about these interviews and interviewees, as well as each case study's context can be found in 'Chapter Four: Methodology'.

Case Study One

This study focuses upon MYP coordination at an international private school, through interviews with the school's MYPCO, Diploma Coordinator (DPCO), and a Subject Leader (SL).

I. School Setting

Organization of the Programme

While the MYP is a fully inclusive programme, it straddles two divisions: a middle school and a high school. The MYPCO pointed out what he perceived as his school's organizational challenges:

We have teachers who teach in both the Middle School and the High School levels, we have a MYP coordinator who covers the two, but then we have separate Middle School and High School Principals. It doesn't help the MYP to have these segmented views. We need one whole Upper School Principal.

Resources

When asked to compare his school to a public MYP school in the same city, the MYPCO responded:

We're definitely more nimble than a big public school. We can tinker with schedules, add resources. We've got more money for PD. We've got more leadership positions to support our programme.

External Accountability Requirements

The school is accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS), a regional association of colleges and schools, and the IB. Its middle and high schools are not, however, bound by any local, regional, national, or international curricular requirements other than those of the International Baccalaureate (MYPCO). According to the MYPCO, *"we can focus on MYP"*.

II. Implementation

Aims

The school was very reluctant, hence, slow in its decision to adopt the MYP. While the DP had been in place for over a decade, the school had more recently struggled to gain authorization for the PYP due to logistical issues surrounding its dual-language approach. According to the MYPCO, *“there was (also) a perception from administration that the MYP was quite nebulous, underdeveloped”*. With the prodding of several staff members - in particular, the current MYPCO, who had the experience of coordinating the MYP at another international school - an MYP study committee was formed. Based on the recommendation from the committee’s feasibility study, the administration decided to implement the MYP. The programme would be rolled out over four years, commencing with Grades Six and Seven in the fall of 2006.

The school’s website frames the MYP as a link between the other two programmes *“philosophically, conceptually and academically, (ultimately) to prepare students for the rigorous IB Diploma programme”*.³⁹

The Subject Leader reflected on the MYP framework:

*Its openness is perfect for modelling inquiry-based learning with teachers.
It would be ironic if it were a prescriptive package provided for staff.*

*(But) it (the MYP) can’t be done half-way. It’s much more sophisticated
and takes longer to bring in than the DP.*

³⁹ In order to maintain anonymity, the reference for the school’s website is reported as: school website/academics, accessed July 26, 2009)

Cultural Challenges

According to DPCO, from this feasibility study to the authorization, MYCO was actually successful in framing the MYP implementation: *“He did a good job of presenting it as a process of research and inquiry we were undertaking together”*.

SL describes the MYP implementation and its suitability to the school:

There weren't any other (local or regional) requirements; there were no unions and the stagnancy that goes along with this. A real institutional solidity to teaching and learning was being developed.

DPCO, however, expressed some frustration:

The MYP Coordinator decided to use the (subject) leaders as the key components in our PD days (for curriculum planning). It's worked pretty well. But they (the subject leaders) sometimes need to come to the realization it's more than just coverage – the more prescriptive, the more you lose critical thinking.

He (MYPCO) tried using sessions with teachers for ATLAS (a brand of curriculum planning software) but that became a fill-in-the-box thing. It's hard to change the mind-set.

Structural Challenges

SL recognized both the inherent challenges and required next steps as follows:

It can't be done half-way; it's sophisticated and does take longer to bring in.

Time is definitely lacking for team meetings, especially cross-subject groups.

We have heads of year but we should really have Areas of Interaction leaders. If they're passionate about one of the Areas, say human ingenuity or the environment, they could invite other teachers in to see what they're doing.

MYP CO identified potential opportunities:

Heads of year should be a natural for promoting horizontal work. Up to now they've been more focused on students' pastoral (i.e. not curricular) needs.

There were three groups of middle managers which MYP CO could especially seek to enlist to move the implementation process forward: areas of interaction leaders, heads of year, and subject leaders. The first group of leaders, who could each promote one of the areas of interaction across the grades, was not established. These positions were, however, planned for the future (SL). The second group, the heads of year (a.k.a. grade leaders), were responsible for the non-academic side, e.g., counseling regarding social and emotional concerns, co-curricular experiences (e.g., field trips). There is much potential for heads of year, given the MYP's emphasis on a holistic model of learning. This role, however, had yet to be fully integrated into the implementation process (see DPCO, SL comments above). The third group of the subject leaders was, indeed, increasingly well integrated into the implementation effort (SL). These were relatively

clearly defined roles (DPCO). There was a natural forum - the subject leaders meetings - to move the programme forward. And there were concrete tasks to discuss and implement together, including the pedagogical approaches and tools of the MYP, and its subject specific aims and assessment tasks (DPCO). DPCO was also included in these subject leader meetings, offering input relating to the vertical articulation of subject's curriculum and other matters relevant to the DP.

The subject leaders, for their part, played a critical role in the PD relating to MYP implementation (DPCO). They did, moreover, become involved in principal-teacher goal-setting meetings at the beginning and the end of the year, which the SL saw as a constructive measure. While the subject leaders did play a part in teacher evaluations, through classroom observations, theirs was largely a mentoring role for their subject colleagues.

Beyond the subject leaders, there was a small steering committee, with representation from subjects and grade levels. This grouping was a loose configuration which met infrequently and eventually not at all as a formal committee. Many of those involved were "*MYP keeners*"⁴⁰ who were still actively collaborating on MYP (interdisciplinary) projects (MYPCO).

Interdisciplinary Opportunities

The most meaningful interdisciplinary work was not created in large collaborative teams but through the initiative of the MYPCO and several other MYP keeners (SL, MYPCO). This work has taken the form of thematic projects or challenges taking place outside of the students' regular timetable. One example was a two day grade six project, *aqua vitae* (water for life), which involved students designing water vessels and transporting water, in order to understand better related issues in the developing world (MYPCO). Another example was a mentoring project between high school debaters and grade seven

⁴⁰ Throughout this enquiry I will refer to 'MYP keeners' as those MYP school staff (whether management or teachers) who enthusiastically support MYP and take initiative in its implementation ahead of most other staff.

students, which focused upon the creation of a model United Nations experience in examining the Darfur crisis (SL).

The Subject Leader reflected:

Off timetable projects may be rare, but there are currently the most powerful interdisciplinary vehicle. One goal of MYPCO is to create more and better interdisciplinary opportunities by combining several subjects under the leadership of a single teacher - for example, English and Humanities. But this might not be possible due to staffing and timetable restrictions. We'll see.

The Diploma Coordinator was still quite critical of the current situation:

Sure, interdisciplinary work is difficult; you need time for meetings. But there's a delusion of what quality is. Sometimes it's not doing things in a conventional (subject-based) way. But there are no chances to take these risks. Maybe people fear they'll get it wrong.

III. Coordination

Profile of the Coordinator

MYPCO described himself as a learner:

I have always liked to figure out, negotiate things on my own. I've always liked some unpredictability and risk. I've always sought out interesting new people.

DPCO reinforced this characterization:

The great thing about him is he is always willing to experiment, be creative, take risks – even if they fail.

Coordinator as Guide Alongside

While MYPCO was also a coordinator elsewhere, he entered his current school as a teacher only. Once the implementation began, he was sure to try out MYP elements in his own class. He justified this:

I wouldn't have any authority unless I could put these curriculum pieces into practice in my own classroom. I'm confident but also honest about how it's going.

SL reinforced this role: *"He (MYPCO) is able to combine his obvious expertise with an ability to mentor, to support teachers."*

Coordinator as Administrator

MYPCO did view the administrative tasks as a challenge:

You really have to ensure that key documents are well-organized, clear, reflective of what's really going at the school. So they mean something to wider group of people – especially the students! – and not just the coordinator. I sometimes feel like it's controlling teachers through paperwork and then I'm controlled by it too. And there's no secretarial support.

You really have to be sure that your job doesn't become narrowly defined. Without enough release time, you feel all the burdens of collection and distribution of all the information, keeping communication going vertically, horizontally, with the IBO, the board, students, parents. There's too much to accomplish fully. I'd really like to be meeting inquiry teams, going into classrooms, giving feedback.

Coordinator as Facilitator

MYPCO saw his job as more than a managerial one:

You have to make sure you are not locked to your desk. I love all kinds of different people I get to work with - not just students, teachers. I have a range of contacts – with parents, in the community. I get to think across multiple issues.

He continued later:

The MYP Coordinator has to be the whole picture leader. You're the one to tell the others what kind of progress they're making – keeping administration on course, getting teachers time (to work).

Senior Management: Lack of Authority Figure

The organizational structure of the secondary school changed over the course of the implementation process. But for most of this timeframe, there was a high school principal, responsible for grades nine to twelve, and a middle school principal, responsible for grades six to eight. On the academic side, there were the IB DP and MYP coordinators and subject leaders. At an early stage the MYPCO acted also as the curriculum development coordinator across the entire school, but later this role was taken on by someone else who came from senior management (MYPCO, DP).

This organizational structure was not helpful for MYP implementation, according to all three interviewees. In particular, though, it was the middle and high school principals who were a source of constant “*frustration*” for MYPCO (SL) (See also MYPCO comment in school setting section).

While the MYPCO reported to the MS principal, his curricular responsibilities spanned into the high school. The Diploma Coordinator assessed the problem as follows:

the two principals just didn't work well together. And there was a fundamental disconnect between the principals and the curriculum coordinators.

While at times there were too many senior managers involved, there was more often too little involvement by the principals in supporting the MYPCO with staff development in this process (DP). On the one hand, the leadership of the subject leaders meetings was appropriately ceded by the senior management team to the curriculum coordinators, MYPCO and DPCO, who had the responsibility and the expertise, to focus on curriculum implementation and development (SL). On the other hand, SL explained:

When the authorization visit was imminent, MYPCO was given larger authority to design the PD with the subject leaders. But there was little active support from the administration – and if PD wasn't well received, then he (MYPCO) was the fall guy.

She later added:

MYPCO was passionate but not all (staff) took it (the MYP) on passionately. There was no stick to back MYPCO up (referring to the administration).

Not only did the principals not attempt to call into account the resisters or non-participants, they did not effectively integrate MYP aims into their teacher evaluations or coordinate goals between the MS and the HS (SL, MYPCO). So while MYPCO had a strong voice and a prominent platform, he did not have the “power” (i.e., authority) that he felt should have been coming from his senior managers (MYPCO). And he realized that if he were to try and step into this authority role, he might lose whatever trust and respect he had earned in his role as mentor to his colleagues (MYPCO).

IV. Accountability and Professional Development

Accountability and its Impact

The school was successfully authorized by the IB for MYP in the 2008-09 school year. Although it has yet to participate in MYP moderation, the leadership team decided that it will do so as it implements further (MYPCO).

MYPCO is keen on participating in moderation:

This extra step will be valuable. It'll provide accountability for subject-based assessment. It will provide good feedback. It will give the MYP a high profile with the (student) certificates.

But MYPCO was not so sure others felt the same way about such forms of external accountability. When asked about the importance of authorization and evaluation visits, he wondered:

Are they really supported by the administration and staff with all the other demands? Are they long term investments or one-offs? I'd like to think it's part of our development process but I'm not convinced yet.

Strengths of PD

Many teachers have attended official MYP training conferences; moreover, the school was assigned a consultant in the lead-up to authorization. MYPCO also organized for subject-specific consultants to come for support. These all were viewed as helpful measures (MYPCO).

Areas for Improvement of PD

There were, nevertheless, some areas for improvement associated with these measures.

SL felt that MYP PD was a work in progress:

There are many reasons why the transfer of knowledge is not happening. There are barriers – support for the after part (i.e., post-workshop) is key. You must practice implementation. While some are doing it deeply, many are still doing it cosmetically.

MYP CO expressed some frustration with the IB organization:

Sometimes there's a lack of clarity from MYP and it's hard to hold people accountable if the programme's so flexible. There's a real disconnect between Cardiff and what's needed on the ground. Don't tell us we have to invent everything.

Having a consultant was helpful but it takes their two (visit) days to identify problems - forget helping to solve them.

It might be beneficial if schools of the same type, e.g., public schools or international schools, could be partnered.

MYP CO and others leading the implementation sought tools outside of the MYP organization, which provided meaningful pedagogical guidance in line with the MYP approach. In particular, tools stemming from the Harvard School of Education - specifically, Project Zero and Teaching for Understanding - were utilized (MYP CO).

Coordinator as Professional Developer

DPCO reported that: *“as the move towards the authorization visit came nearer, opportunities for the PD increased”*. This prioritization of the MYP did allow MYPCO to bring in a number of forums to work with staff in its development of the MYP. First, there were regular short curriculum work periods built into teachers’ timetables in which they constructed their MYP units of study – sometimes with the guidance of MYPCO, sometimes in collaboration with other teachers, and sometimes independently (DPCO). Second, PD days outside the regular teaching schedule were devoted to this effort, both in the new form of established half-days every month and in the long established form of full days before, during, and after the teaching year. Often the format was to begin under MYPCO’s leadership as a whole secondary staff (most teachers taught both in the MYP and the DP) and then to move into respective groups under the leadership of the subject leaders (SL), who had designed their related agendas. Other PD days involved a rotation of a number of different sessions led by MYP experts and keeners on staff (MYPCO). Third, PD retreats - often half-days - were offered to working groups, particularly to subject groups, to accomplish larger pieces of work or special projects (SL). Based on the feedback from all three interviewees, these three PD forums had made valuable contributions to the MYP implementation. In terms of staff perception, the first forum appeared to be least well received, the second forum somewhat well-received and the third forum most well-received by staff (MYPCO, DPCO, SL).

MYPCO had had experience of leading MYP PD both in his prior school and for the IB organization in a variety of roles. Indeed, very early in his MYP experience, he became a workshop leader:

I loved it! After only three years of working at an MYP school I was thrown into leading (MYP) workshops.

Case Study Two

This study focuses upon MYP coordination at a private school in a national setting through interviews with the school's MYPCO, the Director of Studies (DOS), and a Subject Leader (SL).

I. School Setting

Organization of the Programme

The MYP is a fully inclusive programme, although it straddles middle school and high school divisions. The MYPCO has recently been given the additional responsibility for overseeing the middle school division, which “*complicates things slightly*”, i.e. in terms of clear boundaries of oversight and responsibility.

Resources

In responding to whether she thought her school's MYP innovations would be possible in a public school, the MYP Coordinator stated:

It's doubtful. There's no money, so there's no (release) time. All the (IB) leadership spots (i.e., across her school) amount to four teachers. That's a huge commitment.

External Accountability Requirements

The school answers not only to the IBO but also to the provincial authority in order to grant high school (grade nine to twelve) credits and offer a provincial diploma in addition to the IB Diploma; as a private school offering these credits, it is inspected by this authority every other year (DOS). The school's assessment system, therefore, must combine grading schemes, criteria, and descriptors from both masters - the IB and the province - producing a tool which is "*complex, bordering on confusing*" for all parties involved: teachers, students, and parents (SL). MYPCO describes the provincial Ministry of Education inspection as "*stressful, unpredictable, and not at all transparent. It was a control issue.*"

II. Implementation

The decision to bring in the MYP was made shortly after the decision was made to bring in the DP; and the PYP was already being implemented. The decision to implement IB programmes was purportedly made in order to set it apart from other established private schools for girls in the city as well as a vehicle for school improvement (DOS). While the decision to adopt the MYP was made with staff consultation (including an exploratory committee), there was a perception by staff that it was a board/administration *fait accompli* – that the MYP would be inevitable as the final piece of the IB continuum, in order to prepare students for the IB Diploma (SL). Nonetheless, according to the SL, "*our implementation process has involved lots of staff consultation. It's taken a go-slow, piece-by-piece approach*".

Aims

MYPCO recalled the school's consultant's words: "*MYP changes the way people learn*". She concurred:

It (the MYP) produces kids who look at the world differently, who see the world in a connected way more than we ever did in our day.

DOS expressed enthusiasm that the MYP

is a curricular framework that meets the needs of early adolescent. The areas of interaction necessitate everyone putting the child at centre. The approaches to learning...take priority over the disciplines. The MYP also facilitates school management working with faculty.

Structural and Cultural Aspects: Opportunities and Challenges

The MYP implementation “*had to begin with the disciplines – assessment, leveled descriptors, moderation of tasks*” (DOS). And the subject leaders were deemed to be a key to the success of the MYP. They would perform the essential task of ensuring compliance with the MYP disciplinary expectations. Their support of the programme, moreover, would be vital, with their influence on their department members and the faculty culture in general. According to DOS,

Most subject heads brought their subject hat almost exclusively and did not fully embrace the holistic elements of the MYP.

In order “*to overcome silos, build trust, and strive for success for the school’s IB programme beyond their own subject area*”, DOS arranged for a three day off-site workshop led by an expert leadership facilitator (DOS). As a result, a few subject leaders have “*overcome their isolationist inclination*” and have taken a lead in implementing different MYP components, including their participation on different MYP committees (DOS). One such subject leader (SL) has been one of the interviewees for this case study.

MYP CO and DOS, however, viewed the interdisciplinary themes of the areas of interaction (AOI), as “*the hardest element*” of the MYP to implement (MYP CO). It was

challenging “*to find creative mechanisms for organizing cross-disciplinary, cross-division work*” (DOS).

An initial attempt to create a set of AOI leaders was not entirely successful, although there are leaders for several of these areas as well as for the Personal Project (MYPCO). As MYPCO described,

when the leader for one of the areas of interaction, approaches to learning (ATL), would come in to teach ATL in Science, the science teacher would either go out or sit on his computer at back, tuned out; this was the anti-thesis to collaboration.

MYPCO also found it extremely hard to ensure that the areas of interaction were being explicitly addressed by teachers in their classrooms (MYPCO). MYPCO worked to promote the integration of these interdisciplinary themes into all classrooms through common curriculum planning meetings in which she brainstormed and coached both subject-based and grade-level based groups. MYPCO, however, found accountability hard to attain, remarking that “*only around the time of the authorization visit was there much evidence of this (AOI integration) happening*” (MYPCO). In the revised approach to PD (see below) each teacher was asked to make one meaningful interdisciplinary connection with one other teacher, with time provided and accountability enforced (MYPCO).

The leadership team eventually developed tangible tools and roles for ensuring the AoI were prominent in students’ learning experiences. For example, ATL was added to the report card and a stand-alone ATL course in each grade level was created (MYPCO). Mostly faculty with MYP or another administrative leadership role taught this course (SL). In the final year (grade ten) of the ATL course the personal project was introduced and facilitated, again with this small group of MYP leaders acting as mentors for the students’ project development (SL). There was an assigned leader and committee for the two areas of interaction of community (and) service, and environment. In each case, much of the activity was focussed on extra-curricular initiatives, for example, greening the facility,

earth week, and establishing service expeditions (DOS). The school utilized the Duke of Edinburgh programme in building a major pillar of extra-curricular activity for MYP students. This requirement included a requirement for creative, athletic/outdoor, as well as service hours (MYPCO). In addition, MYPCO and her leadership team created several extra-curricular experiences to develop ‘engaged citizenship’ in students, such as excursion weeks based on broad trans-disciplinary themes (e.g., female leadership, and teambuilding through the arts and nature (MYPCO). These pieces must be “*built into the timetable and the school calendar in order for them to happen*” (DOS).

The progress with the implementation of the MYP over the last several years, as MYPCO described it, has been like “*night and day*”. The leadership team acted as “*risk-takers willing to experiment*” (MYPCO). While coordination of the implementation depended upon a few key people and there were “*too many committees and too many meetings*”, there was much faith in teachers and a high level of trust and collaboration – particularly within the MYP leadership team (MYPCO).

III. Coordination

DOS states that: “*the MYP is not a traditional programme with traditional roles*”. There is no one MYP leadership team, per se, with a single set of members. “*MYP leadership has changed each year*” (DOS). Different groups, often in the form of committees, work on different parts of MYP implementation (DOS). The two key leaders of implementation, however, were MYPCO and DOS.

Director of Studies as Facilitator and Amiable Authority

The DOS position is full-time, and oversees academics for the whole school and is accountable to the Head of School for fulfilling the academic components of the school’s strategic plan. MYPCO reports to DOS. Teachers report to their subject heads and DOS. DOS and the Upper School Principal have joint responsibility for teacher evaluation. They

also share joint responsibility for hiring, placing great emphasis on hiring highly qualified IB staff who support the MYP philosophy (DOS).

MYP CO describes DOS as having *“the big picture and the vision for the school. She steers it but is very collaborative.”* She ensured that planning was always being driven by the strategic plan and a leadership team (MYP CO). Key steps and initiatives in the MYP implementation process were mostly led by the leadership team, though often through the vehicle of committees. Such committees often involved a small band of key MYP leaders as well as a few teachers and other staff members from a variety of departments (MYP CO).

MYP CO explained DOS’s approach to accountability: *“it’s pressure and support. Whenever there’s a new initiative, she always provides resources, brings people in, offers PD.”* There were still resisters, but *“there was time (given) for resisters; and, in the end, some did leave”* (SL). DOS’s approach, foremost, was persuasive rather than coercive. MYP CO spoke to this point:

She is an extremely skilful leader in working with people. She’s brilliant in terms of turning unhappiness or anger of teachers into a learning opportunity. She can turn around resistance. She helps teachers solve it for themselves; she gives it back to them. In the end, they feel good.

Under DOS’s leadership, explained SL, *“change is organic. There are opportunities to learn, to grow with it. It’s constructivist. It’s safe.”* She is, moreover, constantly recalibrating according to the success of different initiatives in response to *“where teachers are at”* in their development (MYP CO).

Profile of the Coordinator

In reflecting on her teaching career, MYP CO explained:

I almost always say yes – right from being a young teacher. I have always been attracted to places where innovation is going on. I have always been involved in stuff that pushed my professional learning. There are always

those opportunities to take risks and learn something new. The difference is whether you take them. I always seem to take them.

Coordinator as Guide Alongside

MYPCO was glad not to have responsibilities for teacher evaluation:

I think in my role, it's better to help than (to) be a judge. Having an evaluation role would change my relationship with staff. I wouldn't want to do that.

MYPCO's style was to lead by example. Along with her MYPCO role, she teaches one-third of the time. As a part-time teacher, *"I'm able to develop and pilot MYP initiatives in my own classroom"*. Having been brought into the school and the role of coordinator from an outside educational institution, she had much experience with developing inquiry-based curriculum. MYPCO described her own learning style as *"hands-on, concrete ways of connecting classroom to world outside"*. She has sought to balance her ideals and optimism about the programme with the pragmatic challenges she shares with her staff:

When I work with teachers, it's ad hoc, not fixed in the schedule. You're acting as learning resource. 'Can I come in?' Soon they were inviting me in. It's important to support new teachers. My approach is to share war stories, classes that fell apart. I'm not trying to come across as a wise sage. But there is an element of persuasion through modeling.

As SL explained:

An important role for MYPCO is motivating, providing resources, encouraging others to share; telling them 'it's do-able!' Changes are just bit-size, manageable. 'It's just a tweak, a slight change'.

Coordinator as Administrator

While MYPCO asserted that there was no direct teacher accountability to her, all curriculum documentation “*goes through her*”. She disliked having the responsibility for asking teaching for their curriculum plans, since most teachers disliked this task.

It's the least pleasant part of job: telling teachers they have to do something completely differently – like the new report card. Teachers hate paperwork – it's so time-consuming.

Curriculum documentation often remained incomplete at the end of each year. In response, DOS devised a new approach to better ensure this accountability, through professional development days at the end of the year (see PD selection below) (MYPCO).

III. Accountability and Professional Development

Accountability and its Impact

The school was successfully authorized by the IB for MYP in 2006 and has decided to participate in IB moderation of their disciplinary assessments, so that their students could be eligible for the MYP certificate in the final year of the programme (MYPCO). MYPCO assessed the staff's experience of accountability with the MYP thus far: “*Although it has involved lots of paperwork, the MYP (approach) has been transparent and high trust.*”

DOS makes the observation:

The documents for (MYP) Application A and B don't invite or require collaboration. It's at the human level that MYP is a school improvement vehicle. It's about building a culture of trust, giving honest feedback.

Areas for Improvement of PD

The school's MYP leadership team did not find MYP PD particularly helpful to staff. The IBO's provision of a pre-authorization consultant to the school was only slightly useful, according to SL. Many teachers attended MYP workshops, although with *"mixed reviews"* (MYPCO).

The workshops for MYP Coordinators and Heads of School were, according to MYPCO,

too much about the nitty-gritty, basic info and had nothing to do with curriculum leadership. And many of the coordinators do act just as managers, people who put names into computers, do timetable work, send people to training, get the documents, make the copies. They're paper-pushers not big picture thinkers, not 'how do I really work with my teachers to develop the curriculum?'.

MYPCO and DOS made several suggestions for improving MYP workshops:

- focus more on the stages of implementation and the underlying change management issues;
- utilize more case studies and exemplars;
- and involve schools' entire MYP leadership teams.

Strengths of PD

As MYP implementation process progressed, the school's academic leadership team provided MYP teaching staff internal and external PD through a number of consultants, speakers and trainers. This PD included many topics implicitly related to all three IB programmes, e.g., assessment for learning, critical thinking, backward planning curriculum

design, differentiated instruction (DOS). The team has also “*networked with other IB schools*” in the local and regional area to locate useful exemplars of initiatives and to facilitate constructive professional dialogue between teachers (DOS). As MYPCO describes: “*there is a collaborative culture between IB schools. I guess it’s because you have common ground.*”

The MYP leadership team appreciated the MYP’s flexible framework, its respect for school autonomy, and its invitation to schools to act as “*co-creators*” of the programme (SL). DOS found helpful the recent emphasis on standards and practices (DOS). Nevertheless, since team members view the MYP as requiring so much less accountability than PYP or DP, they would like to see more specific expectations being communicated and exemplars of excellence being offered (SL, MYPCO, DOS). Certainly the emerging online courses and professional discussion forums were recognized as supportive tools (SL). DOS was enthusiastic about recent joint ventures between IBO and other education institutions and programmes, e.g., Harvard, Museum for Natural History). She felt that drawing upon outside expertise and integrating it into the MYP framework would provide significant value (DOS).

Coordinator (and MYP Leadership Team) as Professional Developer(s)

Where MYP guidance was lacking, DOS and MYPCO organized much of the PD in support of the MYP implementation. For example, DOS arranged for a three day off-site workshop led by an expert leadership facilitator, in order to try to foster support from and build leadership capacity of the subject leaders (DOS).

While such PD experiences often inspire and stimulate teachers, sufficient “*work time (to integrate PD into practice) is rarely provided*” (MYPCO). This realization shaped recent design of PD work weeks at the beginning and end of the school year. DOS and IB coordinators “*learned through failure*” and decided that these weeks should mirror an effective lesson for students. The team would launch sessions, present staff with exemplars, and then provide teachers time to work in their grade and subject teams, with support available (MYPCO). The leadership also presented teachers with a checklist of

deliverables due before summer departure, and found that accountability *“took care of itself much more easily”* (MYPCO). DOS and MYPCO felt this approach to PD was a vast improvement from earlier haphazard PD attempts and *“could work anywhere”* (MYPCO).

From early in the implementation process, a number on the MYP leadership team decided to take up the opportunity to become IBO workshop leaders, consultants, and site evaluators. SL asserts, *“it’s phenomenal PD as workshop leader. You learn most when you teach it.”*

MYPCO enthusiastically declares:

The IB is in line with my professional beliefs, so it’s natural that I became a workshop leader. And it’s a luxurious situation that working at a private school offering IB has provided me. Anybody can be involved (in IB leadership). They (IB) want everybody. They (IB) need everybody.

Case Study Three

This study focuses upon the coordination of a joint partnership MYP involving a MS and a HS in a national public setting. I interviewed the one Middle School MYP Coordinator (MSCO), the two HS MYP Coordinators (HSCO1, HSCO2), as well as the HS Principal (HSP).

I. School Setting

Organization of the Programme

When asked about organizational obstacles, HSP replied: *“the size (of our school) and (being in) two buildings are the biggest disadvantages for communication”*.

Another major challenge for the HS has been that the MYP has been neither a fully inclusive nor fully exclusive programme. On the one hand, creating an all-inclusive (whole school) programme in the HS is not possible, given the school’s commitment to the other schools within schools (including a vocational stream, e.g., chef’s training) (HSCO2). On the other hand, the MYP cannot be fully exclusive in the HS, given that some courses, particularly in the HS, must be offered in combined class - of both MYP students and those in other (academic) programmes - due to numbers and timetable restrictions (HSCO2). This factor, in turn, necessitated a number of *“less-than-keen”* teachers teaching IB classes (HSP). The MYP leadership team found it challenging relying on a small group of core staff who teach in the MYP section of the school. Those teachers dedicated to MYP were often the same teachers who were involved in many other extra-curricular activities with their students. So it became difficult to ask too much of them, including attending extra meetings and completing more curriculum documents.

When asked to compare nearby private MYP schools with their public context, HSCO1 vented:

In private schools, teachers are able to get on with their work. You can mould the whole school around the IB, even if you do have to use a carrot and a stick. It’s as neat and tidy as it comes.

In the MS the programme was exclusive. As the MS Coordinator explained, *“(t)he existing French immersion stream seemed a natural place for the MYP stream, given its high academic emphasis.”*

Students must apply for admission both for the MS and for the HS MYP, if they are not coming directly from the feeder MS's programme. HSCO2's justification was that "*they (students) need to be prepared for the rigour of the Diploma*". Criteria for admission in both schools included: high grades in key academic areas, positive teacher references, and evidence of strong written communication, with a timed personal response statement assigned for the MS application (HSCO1). Approximately forty of the fifty-five MS MYP graduates continued on to the MYP HS, allowing for approximately one-hundred and eighty new MYP students to enter at grade nine (HSCO1). The three coordinators shared the responsibility for the admission and induction processes.

Resources

According to HSCO1, "*funding has been a major challenge*" (HSCO1). The school district board has provided minimal funding along the way, with the justification being that this programme is not a prescribed provincial programme (HSP). While the board now covers the annual fees and half time release (from teaching) for one coordinator (for both the MYP and the DP), creative measures to find the rest of the necessary funds were required (as will be addressed in the next section).

External Accountability Requirements

As public schools, formal accountability for both the MS and the HS comes through the school district board and its superintendents, to whom the principals report directly. The HS was responsible to the provincial authority in order to grant high school (grade nine to twelve) credits and offer a provincial diploma. In seeking to fulfill both the provincial and the IB assessment requirements, the approach with the schools' MYP was to produce two sets of marks and two sets of report cards (HSCO2).

HSCO2 assessed this approach:

It's less messy than trying to mesh the two assessment systems, but more work with the double-marking. It is definitely an additional burden for staff.

II. Implementation

The choice to adopt the IB and the MYP began with a few staff members. In 2000 one of the HS counsellors and one of the subject heads (and future IB Diploma coordinator) became interested in the IB DP and, upon further investigation, decided to “pitch it” to their “receptive” principal (HSCO1). The district school board was not opposed; it was, however, only nominally supportive. HSP described the board as being neutral; as HSCO2 puts it, “they (sic) don’t understand and don’t want to know”. How such logistical issues were managed will be further addressed later.

It was the popularity and rapid growth of the DP programme which prompted consideration of the MYP in grades nine and ten. The DP began with fourteen students and now has over three-hundred students. This IB stream was moved downward into grades nine and ten as a ‘pre-IB’ programme to establish the cohort and prepare them for the DP. The district school board accepted this proposal, though with the only provision being a half time IB coordinator (responsible for both DP and MYP) at the HS. With a strong staff/administrative partnership and a healthy demand from students and parents, the programme was implemented without delay (HSCO1).

Aims

HSCO2 stated: *MYP is a good IB (Diploma) preparatory programme. It's an effective delivery method. It's about developing key skills.*

HSCO1 asserted:

The DP is out of the can - the what, the how. It's pretty regimented and an easy first step. The MYP is more holistic than (having a) pre-IB (programme) which is just accelerated. The MYP is a framework for good pedagogy. You go from not knowing what's going on behind closed classroom doors to everyone knowing what others are doing.

Structural Challenges

HSP explained how difficult it was to organize MYP planning meetings (HSP). There were several reasons for this challenge. First, HSP stated, “as a unionized school district, teachers are not required to attend additional afterschool meetings after 4 p.m.” Second, meetings between the MS and the HS were difficult due to their different locations and schedules. Third, the size of the MYP staff at the HS made it logistically difficult and also expensive to arrange for substitute teachers. Finally, all common PD days provided by the board always involved a prescribed focus (HSP).

The HSCO2 confided:

In a public school like ours, there's no incentive to do a good job with the MYP. It's not about the IB teaching philosophy. It's impossible to get a meeting with Middle School X (their partner school). We can't get there until 3:30 pm and can only meet until 4 pm. And you just can't have that many teachers away with that many substitutes.

Arrangements for the basic elements alone seemed overwhelming due to the size of the HS. The HSCO2 described it as “organized confusion”. For example, the Personal Project leader had the responsibility of coordinating over two-hundred personal projects, with only a minimal amount of release time (eight percent). While she recruited senior

students to act as mentors to participants, the Personal Project leader had to mark all the projects herself.

The MS, in contrast, has only eight MYP staff, all of whom teach their students for more than one subject. This group, according to MSCO, found it natural to work together:

I'm always meeting with my grade partner to discuss MYP units. You know, what subjects we might combine, which areas of interaction fit, what guiding questions we're going to try.

Overcoming Structural Challenges

The coordinators played the primary role in both the disciplinary and interdisciplinary curriculum development (HSCO2). There were no formal positions such as area of interaction or grade leaders, nor did the subject leaders play a large role. Whatever leadership from the staff was largely “self-selected” (HSCO1). There were few value-added, interdisciplinary initiatives, such as special projects or extra-curricular experiences (HSCO1). Work on the assessment, areas of interaction, and guiding questions remained the emphases of the leadership team (HSCO1). Teachers addressed these elements foremost through their disciplines and in their subject classrooms. And, despite the challenges, concedes HSCO1,

scope and sequence work by (subject) department takes place with (their partner MS school) regularly...usually at the beginning and the end of the year.

Cultural Challenges and Opportunities

HSCO2 reflected:

It took a while to get commitment from teachers and our partner school's (MS) administration. There's still a perception by non-IB staff and students that the IB is elitist.

HSCO2 acknowledged that this perception was accurate in the sense that the school's IB programmes did not provide open access to all students.

With staff mostly having the choice to be part of the MYP, there was a reliance on goodwill. While there was some staff resistance, according to HSP, the “carrots” were the opportunities to work with students who were “highly motivated” and to participate in “incredible PD through (international) workshops and (regional) roundtables” (HSCO2). HSP asserted that the programme attracted “strong teachers” and was an “enriching” undertaking for all.

HSCO2 put the school's context in a positive light:

Teachers have to make a commitment to the extra work. But the bonus is kids who are focussed in IB and work hard. You can really get on with the job of teaching, and not discipline. But in the end, we're still drawing on the generosity of these teachers.

HSCO1 described the merits of the MYP: “We struggled with the MYP. But it's really what you make of it.”

When asked whether the MYP was transformative in any way, the HSP commented:

Yes, I think the most powerful element is that the MYP brings with it a unique professional dialogue between teachers within departments. It's about improving pedagogy and evaluation, developing common standards. It's about sharing of resources among teachers. No teacher is on their (sic) own. It's not territorial- you know, this is my course type of thing. There's a daily dialogue of how they're going to teach – which is the best PD any teacher could get.

III. Coordination

Profile of the Coordinators

The interviewees expressed an exceptional dedication to the cause. As HSCO1 declared, she believes in the mission and is “*willing to bleed for it*” even when the pain - especially the large sacrifice of time and the many obstacles along the way – “*does not always appear to be worth the reward*”. MSCO must largely donate her own time to coordination, but does so because of her belief in the programme's tenets and the value for her students, as well as the opportunity for her own professional development.

Different Coordinators, Different Responsibilities

MYP Coordinator was a hybrid position at the HS. The two who shared the position both advised and supported students and staff in the programme, but had different responsibilities and styles. Much of this division of labour developed naturally, without anything “*being written down*” (HSCO1).

Coordinator (HSCO1) as Facilitator and Administrator

To understand the split role of MYP Coordinator at the HS, one must consider its historical development. HSCO1 was the early trail-blazer in leading the push for both the DP and the MYP. She first became DP coordinator and then later *de facto* MYP coordinator when its implementation began. HSCO1 always acted as the facilitator in the sense of being the “*enthusiastic driver, recruiting others to the cause*” and enlisting support (HSCO2), as well as being “*primary spokesperson and ultimate decision-maker*” (HSCO2).

It became clear as the MYP grew that combining both DP and MYP coordination was unsustainable. As the DP was a largely administrative role, HSCO1 decided to take on this aspect of the MYP also (HSCO1). As the official MYP coordinator, HSCO1 ensured both the MS and the HS programmes met all requirements. She was the liaison to the IBO as well as to the school’s parents, and was responsible for much of the paperwork, including programme registration and admission to the programme. HSCO1 managed the programme week-to-week (MSCO, HSCO1).

*She’s go-go, very highly-strung, and does freak out on staff once in a while.
But she gets things done and puts out the (day-to-day) fires. (HSCO2)*

As HSCO1 explained, while she has been with the programme since its inception, she still “*doesn’t have all the answers*”. Although the “*paperwork is still immense*”, teachers respected her because “*I never ask them to do something I wouldn’t do. (HSCO1)*

Coordinators (HSCO2 and MSCO) as Guides Alongside

Since the MYP is mainly a voluntary endeavour for staff and the school board is ambivalent in its treatment of the programme, the team had to walk a tightrope. The coordinators found it hard to manage their peers – in particular, “*in asking for things that they actually don’t have to do*”. The coordinators’ approach was supportive – whether in

terms of curriculum plans or pedagogy - *“to give a lot of leeway to teachers to find their strengths and make them feel like they’re contributing”* (HSCO1).

The HSCO2 held the official title of ‘cross-curricular coordinator’. He acted as a coach and resource, who focussed on working with staff on their professional development in the basics of MYP pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, whether disciplinary or interdisciplinary in design.

Being on the frontlines, as a teacher, give me a lot more credibility. I can ask my colleagues: who wants to do interdisciplinary work with me?
(HSCO2)

HSCO2 also played the role of an honest broker at times in working through difficult issues, with his *“pragmatic, compact analysis”* (HSCO1). He took a low-key approach and was easy-going in his style (HSCO1).

As well as liaising with the HS coordinators, MSCO acted as lead MYP teacher in the MS. She worked with her fellow teachers on their curriculum development, and sought to lead by example. She explained:

I drive it from my own practice. I have to do everything that everyone else has to do. I just try it and see what works.

Senior Manager as Problem-Solver

The leadership team had to be very creative to address effectively the many challenges. As HSP describes: *“it has not been a traditional textbook approach. We’ve had to experiment and be creative”*. And it appears that HSP was the chief problem-solver in the sense of overcoming the major structural challenges through his own creative means.

HSCO 1 portrayed HSP as: *“willing to go out on a limb and to think out of the box to make things happen”*. HSCO2 said that: *“if he can make it work, he will. He analyses problems and then solves them”*. The coordinators worried that when HSP leaves, so might the MYP (HSCO1, 2).

HSP found, for example, creative ways to overcome logistical challenges such as funding. HSP was eventually successful in presenting his school’s case to the school board and securing sufficient regular funding for a half time IB (MYP and DP) coordinator (HSCO1). In order to fund thirty percent release time for HSCO2, HSP combined this role with several other supervisory roles for other programmes within the school. Funding was also generated by the successful acquisition of grant money to conduct a number of action-research projects at the HS, as well as by the elimination of extra classes and textbooks (HSCO2). HSP took some advantage of the broad board-prescribed PD mandates, in order to create openings for MYP training, including sessions with the MS (HSP).

Certainly the MS principal also had to find creative ways – both in his own school and in collaboration with HSP – to solve such logistical challenges (MSCO). The MS Principal successfully carved out a small amount of release time (less than ten percent) for MSCO. The MS principal managed the MYP in his school in terms of overseeing the money, admissions, hiring and retention of *“good”* MYP teachers, communication to parents, and much of the administrative paperwork (MSCO).

Senior Manager as Amiable Authority

While all teachers, including coordinators, reported directly to their respective principals, *“accountability for the MYP is tricky”* (HSCO2). Although the principals evaluated all teachers, the MYP was not recognized by the board or province as an official responsibility for teachers. The most a principal could do was exert a little pressure on staff and try to coax them in the right direction (HSCO2). As HSCO2 put it: *“no one does it (MYP) one-hundred percent but (the principal’s) hands are tied”*. There was, nevertheless, a large amount of goodwill from the majority who took on MYP

responsibilities. As HSCO2 depicted it: “*he (HSP) is always cooperative, supportive, so teachers work very hard for him*”.

MSCO reflected on the challenges related to accountability in her school:

How do I deal with resistance to the MYP? I remind myself to be polite (laughing). If I need to, I can ask the principal how to handle it. For example, if there's someone who still hasn't done their (sic) curriculum documents, he (the Principal) suggested keeping them behind from the other (board-based) PD.

It's challenging, just figuring out how to manage people who are your peers, asking for things that they actually don't have to do. It's based mainly on goodwill. Although the principal would back me up if I needed it.

IV. Accountability and Professional Development

Accountability and its Impact

The school was successfully authorized as an MYP school in 2005. The high school team decided not to participate in regular moderation of disciplinary assessments due to the costs, though did participate in a one-time ‘monitoring’ (HSCO1).

The authorization and (upcoming) evaluation processes were viewed as opportunities for professional development by the coordinators. HSCO1 remarked:

The authorization made us nervous but it helped us focus. The evaluation will bring renewal. It'll bring the (MS and HS) team back together so we can tweak along the way.

When I asked MSCO about such work, however, she responded differently:

Everyone enjoys producing thought-provoking guiding questions; and then having incredible discussions with the caliber of the IB student. But no one's keen on curriculum-writing. It's time-consuming. I say, you're already doing it; just write it down. Then we can collaborate, share.

Areas for Improvement of PD

Those interviewed hoped that the IB would provide more quality control. They currently viewed the organization as being *"in an info-gathering phase – and when they figure it all out they'll let us know"* (MSCO); until then the MYP was *"what you make of it"* (HSCO2), with MYP schools as the *"guinea pigs"* (HSP). MSCO described implementation as *"aiming at a moving target"* and as being asked to complete an assignment *"without the rubric"*.

The interviewees' perception was that the fit between their needs and desires in order to be an excellent IB school and what the MYP can actually offer remained awkward. And when recommendations from the visiting authorization team (including the explicit designation of certain meeting times and funding) were indeed made, several were deemed unfeasible given the logistical maneuverings required to implement the programme in this setting.

The team would, nevertheless, appreciate more guidance from the IB organization. HSP would like to see more prescription in terms of essential skill development through the IB continuum. i.e. MYP and DP – both within the disciplines and across the disciplines – as well as in terms of the types of essential assessment tasks. HSP would also be keen for more training through the IB for school leadership teams about change management, particularly for coordinators who may not have such experience. As the MYP grows rapidly and changes along the way, HSCO2 wonders if coordinators should not be

required to become certified and then re-certified for the programme. While HSP views “the playbook” as being so different for each school, the official literature is not helpful because either too vague or too technical.

Strengths of PD

HSCO1 did appreciate the many professional development opportunities provided with implementation:

Having the MYP as a framework means you can integrate ideas above and beyond professional courses. It resonates with many teachers – it’s not one-off PD but long-term development.

The coordinators have used a variety of IB resources for their schools’ professional development. The MYP consultant, assigned to help the school prepare for the authorization visit, had a very positive impact on the schools’ MYP development (MSCO). Where there was some confusion around assessment as well as the areas of interaction, the consultant was able to help to clarify (MSCO). The role of consultant was also beneficial for staff to hear “familiar things in a different way”. As HSCO1 confided, “staff are so used to hearing me talk MYP, that they sometimes tune me out”. The leadership team and teachers appreciated the consultant for giving them more “definites”, i.e., a more tangible sense of the non-negotiables, and more useful tools, e.g., backwards design by Wiggins & McTighe - something they felt was lacking from the IBO (MSCO). MSCO reported:

The consultant was wonderful. It was clarifying. She was an expert. She was an excellent communicator. She showed us clearly designed resources, for example, about backwards design (drawing upon the work of Wiggins & McTighe). And then you realize: ‘Oh, that’s what it’s all about!’

The coordinators realized the predicament with this programme. On the one hand, flexibility weakens quality control. On the other hand, prescription does not accommodate local needs very well (HSCO2). This paradox was apparent in the comment of MSCO:

Were the (IB) documents provided helpful? We could use more direction on implementation. Something like a checklist of deliverables. But we don't need it any more prescriptive.

The coordinators appreciated the flexibility of the MYP framework, especially with their need to align curriculum and assessment with the provincial requirements (HSCO2). In their early attempts at finding schools similar to theirs from which they could learn, the coordinators discovered – the hard way - that best practice often depended on context and no two contexts were exactly the same (HSP). The coordinators drew upon other, mainly nearby, schools and upon the OCC with some success; they also produced with their staff their own resource bank of exemplary units. The team also recognized that the MYP was a collective “*evolution*” (MSCO), which was producing more and better exemplars of best practice (HSCO2). The team sees IBO as improving in “*answer(ing) questions with one voice*” and providing more explicit standards and uniform quality control (HSCO2).

Coordinators as Professional Developers

As mentioned earlier, MSCO must largely donate her own time, but does so because it is an opportunity for her own professional development (MSCO). In addition, attending trainings “*in another city can be a real pick-me-up*” (MSCO). As HSCO2 stated: “*going to a conference in California is certainly a carrot*”. Conference-goers then returned, able to share with and support their colleagues. All members of the HS leadership team took on leadership roles with the IB in leading workshops, consultations, and site authorizations (HSCO2).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented four data sets, each sorted according to the empirical study's themes and research questions. While the quantity of data has varied, each set has provided robust and relevant data for each theme, accompanying research questions, as well as emergent sub-themes. I will now proceed to the analysis of this sorted data.

Chapter Six: Analysis and Interpretation of Data and Discussion of Outcomes

Introduction

In this chapter I have several objectives: in the first section, I set out to analyse and interpret the data; in the second section, I discuss the outcomes. The data, to which I refer, was collected in the empirical phase of this enquiry and was reported in the previous chapter. This data includes one set from interviews and three sets from case studies. Each set was classified according to themes and their accompanying research questions which emerged from my literature review and examination of Middle Years Programme (MYP) guides, and also according to sub-themes which emerged during the sorting process. I seek to analyse this classified data by comparing the four data sets, identifying commonalities and differences, and highlighting important issues. I seek also to interpret this data by relating its analysis to my research framework. This framework is based upon key concepts derived from my literature review and my examination of Middle Years Programme (MYP) guides. I occasionally also relate this analysis to other relevant literature. In the second section, I discuss the outcomes more broadly in reference to the International Baccalaureate (IB) and middle management contexts.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

I. School Setting

What has been the effect of the school setting on MYP coordination?

From my literature review I discerned that leadership is distributed and a product of interaction with not only social but also material structures and tools (see pp.29-30, particular references to Spillane et al, 2001, 2004). I also discovered that external

accountability mechanisms have a large, to some extent negative, impact on teaching staff and middle management, particularly in the prevalent neo-liberal context of today. From my examination of MYP guides, I learned that structural considerations for MYP implementation include the organization of the programme as well as resources (e.g., material, financial, personnel).

In examining these three core organizational components - organization of programme, resources, and external accountability requirements – and their effect on MYP coordination in a variety of school settings, I found fundamental differences.

Organization of the Programme: Private/Public School Differences

Based on the interviews and case studies, there appeared to be two significant differences between private and public schools in the organization of the programme. First, the private schools offered the programme within one school, while the public schools did so in partnership, between a Middle School and a High School.⁴¹ Second, the private schools offered the programme inclusively, i.e., for all of their students within the appropriate MYP grade levels; whereas the public schools mostly offered the programme exclusively, i.e., for some of their students within the appropriate MYP grade levels who must apply, as a 'school within a school'.⁴² These organizational differences point to greater logistical demands in the public setting, including:

- a coordinator for each school;
- an extra layer of liaising (between partner schools, their leadership teams, teachers, and students);
- additional timetabling, staffing, and meeting arrangement considerations;
- and an extra layer of responsibilities with the admission process

⁴¹ This difference between the two sets of schools does not preclude private schools from sometimes having multiple campuses or separate middle school and high school divisions within their school, or both.

⁴² An increasing number of public schools have moved to a whole school MYP from a 'school within a school'. There has been a push from the IB organization to provide more access to students, i.e., to promote inclusive programmes in all IB private and public schools. (see IBO, 2004).

Such logistical demands appear to make coordination more difficult in the public school setting than the private school setting.

Resources: Private/Public School Differences

According to interviewees' perceptions and my comparison of their contexts, resources allocated for MYP in the private schools seemed much greater than in the public schools. This difference is manifested in a number of ways. First, more money appeared to be invested in MYP support personnel in private schools, particularly when school size and student population were taken into consideration. For example, in the national private school, there was not only a two-thirds-time coordinator but also a full-time director of studies. In addition, there were several areas of interaction leaders, each with one-fifth release time. In the national public school partnership, with more students than the national private school, the two high school coordinators each had quarter-time release, and the middle school coordinator none. There was, moreover, no area of interaction leaders with release time.

Second, release time for MYP meetings and professional development (PD) appeared to be greater in private than in public schools. For example, in the international private school I studied, there was a monthly half-day for PD, which was not available in any of my interviewees' public schools. In addition, a greater number of international and national private school MYP staff had attended workshops than had staff of the public school. Having ample resources to invest in personnel, time, and training, provided valuable support to private schools' coordinators in their MYP implementation, and was a distinct advantage compared to those coordinators in public school settings.

External Accountability: International/National School Difference

I found a major difference in external accountability between the international and national school settings I examined, whether private or public. National schools had an extra layer of accountability, beyond that of the MYP - namely, regional requirements.

This layer required more work and often also involved the challenge of meshing the two, sometimes seemingly incompatible, curricular programmes and their requirements (e.g., assessment schemes). Interviewees in national settings found the underlying purpose and approach of such mechanisms to be rooted primarily in evaluation rather than constructive improvement. This extra layer made the national schools' coordinators' jobs difficult both administratively and in dealing with additional staff stress.

Fundamental Differences: The Haves and the Have-Lesses

This examination of school setting and its impact on coordination has revealed a significant divide between the haves - namely, the international and national private schools – and the have-lesses, i.e., those in national public settings. Of the three settings, it was the international private school setting which appeared to offer the fewest organizational barriers to MYP implementation and its coordinator. Here was an inclusive programme at one campus with only the International Baccalaureate (IB) organization to which it was accountable. The national private school appeared to have more advantages (i.e., organization and resources) than disadvantages (i.e., additional accountability requirements). It was the national public school which seemed to have, by far, the most difficult organizational context with which to deal. There was a maze of logistical issues (e.g., funding, staffing, communication) with a two-school partnership and exclusive programmes at each school. Indeed, such basic organizational considerations tended to predominate over my interviewees' implementation experience in this setting.

These findings are particularly interesting with reference to the MYP's origins and development, as well as to the current neo-liberal trend in many national settings. First, it seems hardly surprising that international schools would have the most conducive organizational context for MYP implementation, given that the programme largely arose out the needs, desires, and opportunities of such schools in such settings. Second, this section's outcomes on school setting, albeit based on very limited data, seem to be consistent with some of the criticism of the neo-liberal agenda. Adding layers of accountability without ample resources, particularly funding and personnel, appears to make it particularly difficult for schools to be successful by any comparative evaluative measure.

I am certainly aware that the sample of this study is small, and that these cases may not be representative of the majority of international private, national private, and national public schools. To this point, the IB has recently sought to widen access to its programmes, which may be increasing the number of national public schools offering MYP in an inclusive way (i.e., as a whole school).

II. Implementation

What have been important features of MYP implementation?

Based on my analysis of MYP literature, I described the programme as a cross-breed of prescribed disciplinary requirements and holistic, collaboratively-generated interdisciplinary elements (see p.42-3). My broader review of literature indicated how difficult externally-imposed collaborative work is, particularly the interdisciplinary sort, in schools which are subject-based (see pp. 6, 22). This review revealed how school management teams sought to balance seemingly opposing elements, such as those contained in this cross-breed curriculum. Addressing such organizational dilemmas involved both structural and cultural aspects (pp. 31-34).

In this section I examine the aims of MYP implementation, as understood by my interviewees, and then proceed to analyse the structural and cultural challenges which emerged and ways in which these challenges were addressed by coordinators.

Ambitious Aims

All interviewees conveyed how ambitious they felt the MYP was in its aims but also expressed their support. Respondents alluded to the balance MYP sought to strike between holism and pre-Diploma Programme (DP) rigour. A number of interviewees implicitly acknowledged that significant structural and cultural changes would be required

in order to implement this curriculum; and, indeed, the two types of changes were linked. For example, in order to straddle middle and high schools and to address the needs of eleven to sixteen year olds, a flexible framework would be required. Teachers would, therefore, have to embrace this openness and engage in collaborative interaction. Another interviewee pointed out that by making the pedagogical emphasis on inquiry and cross-disciplinary themes, i.e., areas of interaction such as approaches to learning, the common belief that subjects have primacy would implicitly be challenged.

Structural and Cultural Challenges of a Cross-Breed Curriculum

Interviewees frequently identified structural and cultural challenges separately; however, I will show the strong linkage between the two sets of challenges.

The decision to adopt the MYP at interviewees' schools was sometimes staff driven, sometimes administration driven, and sometimes driven by the two in combination. In all cases, the teaching staff participated, to some extent, in their school's consideration (e.g., the national public school's staff-led initiative, the international school's research committee) and implementation planning (e.g., the national private school's steering committee) processes.

The most obvious and important structural and cultural factor affecting implementation was all schools' subject-based organization. This organization was a 'double-edged sword' for coordinators interviewed. In most cases, coordinators decided to take advantage of this feature by beginning the implementation process with an emphasis on disciplinary work – not only, for example, in terms of assessment but also in applying the areas of interaction. Just as subjects offered an existing venue, so too did subject leaders provide an existing leadership role. There was, however, an inherent challenge in taking this disciplinary route as first step. Subject teachers often measured the efficacy of MYP according to the disciplinary expectations of the DP, which preceded the MYP in all interviewees' schools. The fact, therefore, that the MYP curriculum was less prescriptive and promoted interdisciplinary collaboration was sometimes seen by staff as nebulous and less rigorous. According to several interviewees, this perception was

particularly evident with high school based subject leaders (SLs), and this perception was difficult for coordinators to overcome.

This challenge to structure and norms that goes with MYP implementation may have an emotional as well as a social basis, particularly for SLs. Zembylas (2003) claims: *“emotion is interwoven with issues of power, identity and resistance in teaching”* (in Kelchtermans, 2005: 997). Blase (1988: 127) observed that as *“political vulnerability”* grows, teachers often develop protective coping strategies aimed at preserving the status quo. If, as middle management literature indicates high school teachers define their professional lives within their subject domains, as their primary habitats, (e.g., see pp. 22, 34), and SLs are key and often the sole middle managers (see pp. 11-12), there is a much at stake in terms of identity and status. There may be a fear of the loss of power underlying SLs’ sometimes stubborn scepticism. The subject-based ‘grammar of schooling’, as Tylack and Tobin (1994 in Grady et al., 2001) call it, with its structural and cultural dimensions, appears to be designed to protect subject interests (Siskin, 1994), and is, therefore, difficult to change.

Another factor affecting MYP implementation both structurally and culturally was the middle/high school divide. While the logistical difficulties were acknowledged in the previous section, particularly as they pertain to the national public school partnerships, there is another layer to be considered relating to implementation. The national public case study elucidated the relative ease with which the middle school (MS) coordinator could facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration in comparison to her high school (HS) colleagues. There are two structural reasons, I contend, that, in turn, influence culture. First, the MS MYP is much smaller, and, second, each MS teacher usually teaches several subjects. Interdisciplinary collaboration is more convenient, therefore, natural as an MS norm. Perhaps it is for such reasons one interviewee contrasts MS teachers’ openness to MYP with HS teachers’ stubbornness. This difference in attitude may also be explained by HS teachers’ prior experience with the DP and its high stakes system of disciplinary accountability.

Without natural structures which lend themselves to cross-subject, grade, and divisional interaction, and a fully collaborative culture, well-articulated curriculum planning has been

a struggle for all schools represented in this study. Many of interviewees' schools sought to overcome such challenges and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration through the establishment of areas of interaction (AOI) leader positions. While these roles are recommended in MYP guides, they were not a very successful vehicle for promoting AOI, integrating them into the student learning experience, or facilitating interdisciplinary work between teachers, as intended. According to a number of coordinators, these positions, in practice, did not usually come with release time or a natural forum for regular collaboration with staff or students, and, so, were not of much value to MYP implementation.

Interdisciplinary Opportunities

It is evident from my data analysis that effective interdisciplinary work required substantive structural opportunities – in terms of venue, time, leadership, and other resources. Such work had to be practical and provide for noticeable, positive results. As for pre-existing opportunities, the national public school case study showed the middle school model - of smaller teaching teams with each teacher taking on several subjects - to be much more conducive to such work. As for creating structural opportunities, the majority of successful interdisciplinary student experiences cited by interviewees were co-curricular (e.g., excursions and off-timetable projects). The national private school case study indicated that successful facilitation of the seemingly most difficult type of interdisciplinary work, collaboration between subject teachers, required clearly defined goals and accountability mechanisms, as well as sufficient time and support. The only case of much success with areas of interaction (AOI) leadership, I discovered, was one in which there was substantial release time and a concrete venue, course, or programme.

Organizational barriers may make particularly difficult, if not preclude, many of these interdisciplinary initiatives for national public schools such as the one studied here, for reasons identified earlier. Successful implementation of the interdisciplinary elements, however, appears to require more than the absence of such barriers or even the creation of new structures. The data indicates success also requires changing cultural norms.

I discerned a fundamental paradigm difference underlying these disciplinary and interdisciplinary considerations. To draw on the emphases I described in my literature review, there were, to some extent, two competing visions of curriculum. One vision was of a holistic collaborative process (see pp. 6, 44-46), to which MYP supporters subscribed. The other vision was of a disciplinary, autonomously-managed product (see pp. 23-24), to which a number of MYP resisters and sceptics, often including SLs, adhered. It is clear from MYP guides (see p. 49) and, reinforced by interviewees' observations, that the MYP is in its essence a collaborative process of inquiry and experimentation which seeks avenues for developing a holistic, student-centred pedagogy. Contrary to some neo-liberal critics' depictions (e.g., Thrupp and Willmott, 2003), I derived from interviews that many subject teachers sought some level of prescription in their curriculum - as they compared the MYP to the DP. I infer that such prescription provided them with some welcome predictability and security.

Bernstein's theory of educational transmissions provides an additional rationale as to why many teachers might have preferred this curriculum model over the MYP 'integrated' one. Bernstein posits that schools with a 'collection code' actually have more autonomy in some ways compared to schools with an 'integrated code'. Collection code schools emphasize discrete disciplines (strong classification) and a prescribed curriculum (strong framing). Integrated code schools deemphasize discrete disciplines (weak classification) and their prescribed curriculum (weak framing), and emphasize horizontal relationships between teachers across subjects. The latter type of school may appear to have a more open, flexible curriculum and provide more freedom to teachers on an explicit level. Bernstein (1975) claims, however, there is an implicit level of control in seeking to move towards a common pedagogy.

More of the person (is encouraged) to be made manifest, yet such manifestations are subject to continuous screening and general rather than specific criteria. (p. 144)

There is, according to Bernstein, greater autonomy, even privacy, in the subject-based classroom in terms of pedagogy, pacing, and ordering of curriculum. This thesis is certainly consistent with what we learned from the literature review. Teams are

sometimes utilized in order to change culture, particularly as described with the neo-liberal form of accountability, 'collaborative managerialism'.

Interviewees indicated that MYP implementation, in seeking to move to a more 'integrated code', not only takes much time and energy but also contains significant social and emotional risks. Such collaboration requires, from teachers, aspects of what I described in my literature review as 'constructive discourse'. Such an approach involves opening classroom doors and risking exposing their practices, working with others, offering ideas and accepting others', expressing honest opinions, critiquing, negotiating, conceding, and trying new techniques.

Collaborative process and constructive discourse which, I assert, underpin MYP implementation and involve both structural and cultural change, appear to depend heavily on the agency of coordinators and their leadership teams – particularly in terms of these social and emotional components. In each case study, the coordinators were perceived to be modelling experimentation, and then supporting others in this endeavour. This approach seemed to establish credibility and foster trust with teachers. Such an approach was essential for overcoming fears inherent in taking the risks associated with this implementation process. Holding teachers to account was another important aspect, particularly in the national private school case, which was not only respected by teachers but ensured better production from them. It was evident, nonetheless, that all interviewees struggled in trying to change mind-sets, when staff could easily retreat to what was safe, predictable, and stable – their subject-based habitats.

At best, all interviewees agreed, this type of curriculum development was a long term goal. This goal would require significant resources and creative leadership – not only in changing structures but also in changing norms. Certainly, both topics - the role of coordinator and the issues of accountability and PD - are highly relevant to our understanding of such a change process, thus, will be examined subsequently.

III. Coordination

What have been key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP?

In this section I analyse the data relating to key aspects of coordination in implementing the MYP. The literature indicates that those in middle management often find themselves torn between divergent expectations from senior management and their teaching colleagues in implementing change (e.g., see Bennett et al., 2007: 457 on p.14). One constructive pathway, according to this literature, is that of mentoring colleagues through such a change process (see p.20), in which a balance of support and challenge may be struck. I apply such considerations in examining the coordinator, in terms of profile, then as guide alongside, administrator, and facilitator, respectively. In taking a distributed view of leadership, I also examine the senior manager in its involvement with MYP leadership, primarily in terms relating to authority. In the later section on 'discussion of outcomes' I will address differences as well as similarities of key aspects of MYP coordination to those of middle management found in the wider field of literature.

Profile of the Coordinator: Pioneering Spirit

Based on the data, the profile of the coordinator can be typified as one embodying a pioneering spirit. There were two constituent characteristics which clearly emerged from interviews: innovativeness and dedication. Coordinators often described themselves in ways which reflected an innovativeness: as seekers of new challenges, and as risk-takers, who enjoyed experimenting and were willing to push boundaries. Many coordinators also expressed a dedication to the ideological and pedagogical values of this nascent programme, despite the difficulties of implementation. The profile of coordinators seems to be one which is self-selecting. Those who take on this position do so because they are attracted by the opportunity to implement an innovative, idealistic programme such as the MYP.

Coordinator as Guide Alongside

While most coordinators promptly embraced this curricular framework, many of their teachers struggled. As my examination of MYP implementation indicated, this struggle had practical as well as political, social, and emotional dimensions, which the guide alongside function sought to address. I chose this term carefully in order to describe the function accurately to interviewees' explanations. It is the 'alongside' component to this function which, I contend, is indispensable. I inferred from interviews that effective coordination involved a sensitive political framing of the role, in order to provide avenues for on-going communication, support and collaboration.

A consistent picture emerged in regards to the positioning of the coordinator's role. This role was more closely aligned with the teaching staff than the senior management. Not only did most coordinators have teaching responsibilities, they also rarely had responsibilities for evaluating teachers. Being a teacher provided coordinators opportunities to lead by example: they could model inquiry in their own classrooms and thereby provide exemplars for teaching colleagues. By establishing their credibility and showing the value and 'do-ability' of the MYP approach, coordinators were often able to move from provider to co-constructor. Models could then be developed with their teaching colleagues. Many coordinators recognized that their most important responsibility was supporting teachers but also noted the importance of being seen by teachers as 'one of the gang', i.e., in partnership and solidarity with the teaching staff. This perception helped to establish trust and foster risk-taking in teachers.

I sensed that the function of guide alongside is not fully captured by the label of mentor (see pp. 19-20), role model, or lead teacher: neither expertise nor authority is valued as much as the collegial support in taking this risk – and the 'political framing' which provides for such opportunity. Although very limited evidence, there was one outstanding case which speaks well to this point. One interviewee reflected that, while she had exemplified the 'right' spirit and approach – such as I described above - in her first implementation experience, she was not well received in her second MYP school. Staff did not accept her as guide alongside even though she offered many exemplars and offered much support. The interviewee conceded that this second implementation experience was

more of an exercise in providing expertise than an exploratory venture with colleagues. Her credibility did not appear to be based on wisdom or efficiency. Perhaps ironically, her credibility depended on whether she appeared to be willing to take risks, and show her own fallibility in finding her way alongside teaching colleagues. What looked on a rational level to be an advantage was on a socio-emotional level a disadvantage. The interviewee acknowledged a major structural barrier: she was not only MYPCO but also principal, and as such, acted as teachers' 'boss' and evaluator. This political divide appeared to compound the social and emotional disconnect.

This contrary example appears to reinforce prevalent views from interviewees of what is essential to a coordinator's profile and role - shedding light on the social, emotional, as well as political aspects, above and beyond the pedagogical and cognitive aspects, of educational change. It is evident that coordinators' contributions were better-received when emerging within a genuine collaborative process. Such contributions were less well-received when they were presented as a prescribed set of ingredients of a 'change recipe' – something which school effectiveness literature was often criticized for promoting (e.g., see Jamieson and Wikeley, 1998; and Thrupp and Willmott, 2003). I suggest this lesson is important when considering both leadership and teamwork within this curriculum framework. I conclude from this study that while 'finding one's way' with the constructivist elements of this curriculum was a constant source of anxiety for many teachers and, even, coordinators, it was also essential to meaningful change.

I note that this function of guide alongside, or essential aspects thereof, are not featured much in MYP or middle management literature more generally. Fullan (2001) suggests that in most processes of 'reculturing' actions precede beliefs. The decision to commit to the external accountability mechanism becomes the lever for action. The process, however, requires someone to take initial steps in this new direction and show others the way. According to interviewees, guide alongside is a prominent function of coordination in MYP implementation. Reference to such a function, however, is brief, partial, and only found in a more technical MYP document, which states that coordinators should have "*a proven teaching ability and (the ability) to act as a pedagogical leader*" (IBO, 2007: 6). Even then, the denotation only implies political aspects and neglects completely social and emotional aspects. Both of these latter aspects have been deemed in this study as essential to this function. Much middle management literature has emphasized the

importance of influencing culture. I contend that this literature has not, however, provided many convincing models of how to exercise such influence.

Coordinator as Administrator

In order to facilitate MYP implementation, particularly its vertical and horizontal curriculum planning, there were two major responsibilities which coordinators identified: paperwork, i.e., the organization and production of curriculum documents as well as other communication materials, and the scheduling of meetings. Respondents all wished such administrative responsibilities not only took less of their time but also represented less of teachers' perception of 'what they did' as coordinators. While coordinators viewed these tasks as necessary, they conceded that teachers often viewed them – especially the production of curriculum documents – negatively. The large amount of time and energy that teachers felt they invested had a minimal impact on teaching and learning and so they sometimes expressed resentment towards the coordinator.

Some teachers, presumably those subscribing to 'autonomous professionalism', perceived the tasks as disconnected from the student experience and classroom efficacy. Other teachers, presumably those more inclined to support 'collaborative professionalism', perceived them sometimes as disconnected from genuine school improvement. Even if such documents are intended to be the product of collaborative planning, I can attest, as an experienced MYP coordinator, to their burdensome volume and length. Such administrative work is dictated by accountability mechanisms, e.g., authorization, evaluation, and moderation. These mechanisms, then, can exert a controlling presence in the work of coordinators, and, in turn, in the work of teachers.

Coordinators in national public settings felt particularly overrun by their administrative responsibilities. I gathered that this feeling was due to the extra layers of administration involved: with a programme usually organized exclusively, i.e., school within a school, and in partnership, i.e., middle and high school. The national public high school featured in one case study, indeed, decided to divide coordination responsibilities, with one person focused almost entirely on such administrative responsibilities, so the other could act as 'guide alongside'.

Administrator versus Guide Alongside

Coordinators implied that acting as administrator was only tolerable if they were primarily perceived by teachers as guide alongside, willing to produce the same documents and support their colleagues' efforts. This balance, however, is not only dependent on agency but also structural support such as resources. If coordinators were provided generous release time and encountered minimal organizational barriers, such as the case in the national private school, there was much opportunity to strike this desired balance. If, however, coordinators were provided with only limited release time and presented with many organizational barriers, the position of MYP coordinator became narrowly defined, even controlled, by these administrative requirements. Such would be the case in the national public school were it not for the creative problem-solving of the high school principal. Most coordinators interviewed found their situation to be somewhere in between the worst and best case scenarios. These coordinators had some time and opportunities for both planned and spontaneous meetings with staff for support when teachers needed it, and not just when documents were needed. All coordinators, nevertheless, wished they could be working more with teachers in their classrooms, providing them additional support and constructive feedback.

Senior Manager as Authority Figure

I discerned from coordinators that they were not only dependent on their senior managers' structural support (i.e., provision of material and human resources) but also on their authority in order to execute these functions of guide alongside and facilitator effectively and manage the many attendant responsibilities. With such essential, though unpopular, administrative responsibilities to fulfill, coordinators possessed little formal authority to ensure compliance. Coordinators were called into account by the IB as their schools' lead representative; however, they were reliant on teachers to produce the majority of work. As much as they sometimes 'nagged' and tried to 'chase down' non-compliant teachers, coordinators were ultimately reliant on their senior managers (e.g., head of school, middle and high school principals) to call these teachers into account. Fortunately for the coordinators I interviewed, they were mainly content with the support they received from their senior managers, particularly in acting as the 'authority figure'.

These coordinators certainly preferred not to have to 'play the heavy', in calling teachers into account. There were several coordinators who expressed frustration with lack of effective support from their senior managers. These coordinators realized, however, that any attempt to take on such authority themselves would undermine their credibility as guide alongside.

Many interviewees depicted their senior managers as 'amiable authorities'. It became evident in the case studies that those senior managers who were well respected by staff, exercised the art of persuasive dialogue rather than applying coercive tactics, seeming to draw upon the implicit authority of their role. There may have been covert pressure but there was also overt support, particularly in terms of resources, e.g. for PD, as well as moral support. By providing safety and assurance to teachers, several interviewees pointed out, senior managers helped to nurture innovation. In such cases management did not need to resort to 'playing the bad cop', in enforcing compliance from resisters. Senior managers who were not invested sufficiently in MYP implementation and were not effective 'authority figures' appeared to leave coordinators vulnerable to staff resistance.

Coordinator as Facilitator

It is evident from the data that MYP implementation is a complex undertaking with many moving parts; and as such, requires someone – as Fayol (1984) defines it - who both deploys and harmonizes these parts for overall effect. As dependent as coordination is on the support of senior management, it is clear from the MYP literature (see pp. 50-51) as well as my empirical evidence that the main responsibility for this complex undertaking resided with the coordinator. I suggest that the term, facilitator, connotes accurately the role of taking on such larger responsibilities as interviewees have described them, directing both the specific steps and the overall process of implementation.

There are three overarching functions of facilitation that I discern from interviewees' comments. One such function I would liken to being a chef: determining whether the process requires more of one ingredient and less of another (e.g., interdisciplinary vs. disciplinary elements, PD formats). A second such function I would describe as that of pace-setter: sometimes deciding to speed up the implementation process, other times to slow it down. A third function is that of connector: bringing constituents together, showing

them where they fit in, and what is expected. This function would pertain to their work with teachers, subject leaders, AOI leaders, and senior management, for example, in preparing for an authorization visit; it would also pertain to their interaction with students and parents, for example, in understanding MYP certificate requirements or the role of the AOI.

I infer from the data that these three functions are more interactive than directive. An effective facilitator – as the national private school's DOS was described - was constantly recalibrating according to the success of different initiatives *“in response to where teachers are at in their development”*. It is apparent from interviewees' descriptions that facilitation requires being adaptive and being able to improvise, particularly with the flexibility of the MYP framework.

MYP CO in the Middle: Much Responsibility, Little Formal Power

It is particularly challenging for the MYP coordinator to act as 'facilitator'. The strategic planning and execution of such an ambitious curriculum is particularly hard for someone who holds a position of middle leadership. Such responsibilities are particularly difficult without direct control of resources (financial or otherwise) or authority over personnel. Indeed, one might deem the exceptional case of the director of studies at the national private school - who fulfilled this function as senior manager and did so very effectively - as evidence in support of this assertion. There is a sort of 'double bind' for this '(wo)man in the middle'. When problems crop up, the facilitator usually does not have the jurisdiction to solve them but somehow must ensure that they get solved.

Literature on the general role of coordination points to the challenge of bringing together multiple parts in complex organizations, where directive supervision is not always possible or appropriate. On the other hand, as we learned from middle management literature, the '(wo)man in the middle' is particularly well positioned to mediate as honest broker the organizational dilemmas that schools must try to address. Being situated in between the senior management and the teaching faculty provides opportunities to bridge the two distinctive viewpoints. Indeed, my study indicated that facilitation was more

interactive than directive. This function involved negotiation, improvisation, and recalibration according to where staff members were in their development. There was a delicate balance of sometimes advocating for teachers to the senior management (e.g., for time or other resources) and other times trying to persuade senior management to demand more of teachers (e.g., documentation submission, incorporating MYP expectations into teacher evaluations). I infer that coordinators must be politically savvy, dialogically oriented, and personally persuasive in order to succeed with this function. This assessment of important traits is consistent with those highlighted in my review of middle management literature.

IV. Accountability and Professional Development

What have been important features of MYP accountability and professional development and what have been their impact on MYP coordination?

In this section, first, I analyse accountability and its impact. Second, I analyse PD in terms of areas of improvement, strengths, and the coordinator as professional developer.

Accountability and its Impact

There are two perspectives on MYP accountability which need be understood. On one level, schools implementing MYP experience accountability, first and foremost, through the authorization visit. Teachers viewed this experience with ambivalence, according to coordinators; they responded to pressure, produced the curriculum documentation, and performed to the satisfaction of management. Aside from the disdain for the paperwork, and the extra time commitment involved, the authorization visit itself was considered by many teachers as reasonable, especially compared to many national schools' experiences with their regional masters. On another level, many coordinators alluded to the MYP's long-term process and underlying approach to accountability, in which they placed much trust. Coordinators' widely held support for moderation is strong evidence. It appears that, especially in this initial phase of implementation, teachers accept MYP

accountability mechanisms primarily as a stamp of approval, while coordinators see these mechanisms foremost as a long-term vehicle for school improvement.

Areas for Improvement of PD

Interviewees were quick to identify areas for MYP PD improvement. Their staff largely struggled with the openness of the MYP curricular framework, particularly in the early stages of implementation, and sought direction and tools from the IBO. While coordinators recognized the nature of the MYP - that this nascent programme was dependent on schools for exemplars, many expressed frustration in not being provided with clear and consistent expectations and guidance. The tools the MYP did offer received mixed reviews from interviewees and their staff. Interviewees found MYP workshops to be of varying quality, often due to the participants as much as the trainers. A common recommendation in order to meet needs more fully was to organize trainings more strictly according both to participants' level of experience and to school settings. Especially noteworthy, moreover, a number of interviewees complained that coordinators' workshops were focussed more on managerial than pedagogical and leadership aspects of the role. MYP guides were perceived as sometimes too vague and other times too technical. Consequently, many coordinators sought pedagogical tools beyond the organization to support more adequately MYP implementation.

Strengths of PD

All interviewees recognized that MYP had made significant improvements in its professional development resources for schools. Interviewees also conceded that the programme needed to remain flexible in order to accommodate implementation in different settings. To that end, one resource which many found useful was the provision of a pre-authorization consultant⁴³. In summary, interviewees described the consultant's role as twofold: being an IB expert, who could speak to staff with authority and, further, being a mentor, someone whom the staff trusted to help.

⁴³ The pre-authorization consultant is a support not provided by all MYP regional offices.

The principle of professional exchange comes through strongly from interviewees' assessments of their PD experiences at a number of levels:

1. between schools and the MYP organization, with honest, constructive discourse about expectations;
2. between schools' coordinators, who share a common setting (e.g., location, type of school), thus, exchange ideas and resources; and
3. between teaching colleagues within schools, especially as they develop their own expertise.

I discerned from interviewees' comments two significant features of MYP PD, as their schools proceeded with implementation. The first feature is that professional development shifted from being a receptive engagement, i.e., 'what can MYP provide us?', to a generative one, i.e., creating one's own exemplars. A second and complementary feature is that MYP's open framework and inclusive approach was viewed more as a sign of strength than of weakness, as implementation progressed. As a number of interviewees explained, MYP's capacity to integrate diverse resources (both within and without) allowed schools' pedagogical practices to progress. It was evident from respondents that, indeed, MYP did promote collaborative partnership in order to evolve its curricular framework.

Coordinator as Professional Developer

During the implementation process, most coordinators interviewed became professional developers themselves both within their schools and on behalf of the IB. This in-school responsibility required the coordinator's pedagogical leadership and resourcefulness in drawing upon many resources. Such resources included materials and trainers from without as well as other in-school academic leaders and MYP enthusiasts on staff to facilitate these PD sessions. This responsibility for PD appeared to demand the leadership team's creativity in terms of its format and scheduling, as described at the international and national private schools. All interviewees agreed that having ample time was a primary factor for PD success, especially when such time was offered in larger blocks away from school. The national private school's leadership team proudly credited their linking PD more closely with accountability for producing effective outcomes.

The fact that all coordinators took on some kind of leadership role(s) with the IB organization indicates two things. First, the profile of the group I chose to interview is one which was highly engaged with the programme and relished opportunities to be so. Second, as interviewees point out, the organization offers a multitude of such opportunities and so actively encourages this sort of 'creative professionalism'. For those interviewed, such opportunities offered outstanding professional development both in terms of leadership skills and social and emotional fulfillment. The coordinators not only learned much by leading workshops, they also felt this was a boost to their confidence, even reenergizing. Whereas the implementation process at their school might at times be bruising, the IB had placed extraordinary faith in them. An overriding benefit to being an MYP practitioner was the access to a huge support network of fellow practitioners – many of whom were at the same implementation stage. Coordinators expressed empowerment from solving problems collectively; they noted also the professional friendships which were made.

Fostering Collaborative Partnerships and Creative Professionalism

In my analysis of MYP literature, it was evident that the elements of accountability and professional development were conceptualized as complementary forces. These forces were intended to foster collaborative partnerships between the IB and MYP schools. These two elements were also intended to foster creative professionalism in MYP practitioners, particularly coordinators. Curriculum development, according to the MYP, is a two-way, evolutionary process, which is dependent on such creative professionalism.

In terms of being called into account for fulfilling MYP expectations, my analysis of data on MYP accountability and implementation indicates ambivalence from teachers and appreciation from coordinators. Some teachers were enthusiastic; some were sceptical, even resistant. According to interviewees, however, most viewed MYP accountability mechanisms such as the authorization process as time-consuming, somewhat stressful and impractical, yet fundamentally reasonable. I certainly did not get the sense from interviewees that any staff perceived the MYP to be imposing a heavy-handed form of managerial accountability. For their part, coordinators appeared to have much faith in

MYP accountability. On the one hand, coordinators appreciated the pressure of such mechanisms for inducing staff to take steps towards fulfilling such expectations. On the other, coordinators felt the approach did, indeed, reflect a positive emphasis on aiding schools' self-evaluation and improvement.

Unlike national systems of accountability requiring school compliance, the MYP is a self-selecting programme. The schools I studied adopted the MYP voluntarily and by their own choice. This decision was often ultimately made by school governors or senior management. In many cases, however, teachers were included in the decision-making and initial planning processes, even if only in a consultative capacity. The data also shows that MYP keepers – whether coordinators, senior managers or teachers - elected to take leading roles on their own initiative, albeit eagerly supported by their school and the IB. It is apparent from interviewees that the emphasis with MYP has been on presenting opportunities for school improvement and professional development, rather than on compliance and control.

There was strong congruence between my data and MYP literature on PD. There were many clear indications that the interviewees did implicitly perceive the PD as a two-way, evolutionary process between schools and the IB organization. MYP PD received mixed reviews from interviewees. There, however, appeared to be an honest, albeit sometimes critical, ultimately healthy relationship between the IB organization, MYP schools, and their coordinators, which served to underpin the larger process of school implementation, improvement, and curriculum development. Interviewees certainly expressed some frustration with the limitations of IB guidance in supporting school implementation of this open-ended curricular framework. There was, nonetheless, a realization by and eventual appreciation from coordinators that MYP PD was a work in progress as was the programme itself. I observed that this process seemed to have a generative, iterative quality. Many interviewees cited, for example, MYP's strength in facilitating a sophisticated network of professional exchange. This exchange was not only between schools and the MYP but also between schools' coordinators, colleagues within schools, even between the MYP and other institutions and resources.

The impact of MYP on teachers and students is unclear, and, indeed, has not been the focus of this study. MYP implementation, however, appears to have been a transformative experience for the coordinators I interviewed. In many ways, these coordinators have taken a lead in this curriculum development process in embodying creative professionalism. Those I interviewed have risen to the challenge - both in finding creative PD solutions for their own schools and in taking the initiative to lead PD, as well as other activities, on behalf of the IB organization. It is readily evident that these coordinators have benefited immensely from these opportunities, both in terms of skills and social and emotional fulfillment. The MYP organization and coordinators' schools have quite clearly benefited as well. I have shown that the elements of creative professionalism, pedagogical leadership, and change management are central to the coordinators' experience of MYP implementation. The programme's workshops and guides, however, appear to underplay the importance of these elements.

The MYP, as it has been experienced by interviewees, seems to offer a relatively healthy balance in managing a primary organizational dilemma in schools today and an important focus of this enquiry. This dilemma involves accountability, with its pressure and top-down quality control, and professional development, with its support and bottom-up curriculum experimentation and innovation. In fact, based on my data, I aver that the external element of accountability has simply acted as a benevolent form of pressure - one might call it a 'gentle nudge' - for educators to partner with the IB and other schools in a largely collaborative and creative form of professionalism. This experience seems to differ greatly from many instances reported in middle management literature, particularly in Britain, in which more managerial forms of accountability dominate.

Concluding Comments

To this point in the chapter I have analysed and interpreted the data and established the main findings of my empirical study according to themes – school setting, implementation, coordination, and accountability and professional development; their accompanying research questions, and emergent sub-themes.

I have found, first, that school setting had a significant impact on coordination. Major differences of organization, resources, and external accountability requirements were identified between the three school settings. The national public school appeared to have the most logistical challenges. Second, interviewees considered the cross-bred curriculum of MYP to be ambitious in its aim to forge links between middle and high schools and between subjects. Coordinators recognized the strong departmental culture which was rooted in their schools' subject-based organization as well as the pre-existing experience with the DP. Coordinators, therefore, often decided to emphasize disciplinary planning in the initial implementation stage. This predominant structure and culture, however, presented barriers to interdisciplinary planning, especially in high schools. The few interdisciplinary successes seemed to come from experimentation, resource investment, structural changes, (e.g. new roles, programmes, off timetable projects), and increased accountability demands.

Third, in their attempts to implement MYP successfully, coordinators shared a profile of innovativeness and dedication. Several key functions were taken up by interviewees. As 'guide alongside', coordinators worked as colleagues to teachers in providing and then co-constructing MYP curriculum units. This function was particularly important for establishing credibility and trust. The function of 'administrator' required the management of curriculum documentation and meetings, which neither coordinators nor their teaching staff perceived favourably. To act as 'facilitator' involved overseeing the implementation process in terms of pace, emphasis, and communication, and depended on coordinators' abilities to improvise and enlist support. The study found that interviewees had much responsibility, yet little formal authority. Coordinators, therefore, relied on their senior managers not only to address logistical challenges (particularly in the case of the national public school) but also to act as authority figure. While this function sometimes required calling teachers into account, most senior managers used persuasive rather than coercive tactics.

Fourth, MYP's accountability mechanisms were viewed by interviewees as reasonable and somewhat effective. As much as interviewees were critical of MYP PD, they came to respect its model of collaborative partnership between the organization and participating schools in evolving its curriculum framework. Such approaches to accountability and professional development reflected a trusting relationship which allowed honest, constructive discourse. Coordinators and their leadership teams largely embraced this

open-ended model, acting as 'creative professionals' in leading PD in their schools and for the IB.

I will now proceed to the discussion of outcomes, in which I build upon this section-by-section analysis and interpretation in considering wider implications.

Discussion of Outcomes

There are several significant differences between the findings of this study and those of the middle management literature I reviewed, particularly in comparing the role of MYP coordinator to that of SL, the chief focus of such literature. Before highlighting such differences, I recognize that these roles shared one important feature. With both roles being situated in the middle, there was an expectation to act as mediators between teachers and senior managers, and practice and policy. This expectation placed these agents on the frontlines of schools' emotional and political drama.

The first important difference is the way in which these two roles were constructed or framed politically, relative to teaching colleagues and senior managers, and these roles' underlying features of collegiality and authority. I suggest that the way in which the role of MYP coordinator was constructed made facilitating collaboration more likely but enforcing accountability less likely than for SLs. The coordinators I interviewed certainly did not experience the role conflict that many SLs did. As most coordinators had teaching but not teacher evaluation responsibilities, they had a good opportunity to act as guide alongside, providing exemplars and often then becoming co-creators with their colleagues. I chose the term 'guide alongside' rather than 'mentor'. I felt this term better reflected the emphasis in the prescribed responsibilities and the intended positioning of MYP coordinator as often being closer to the teaching staff, as compared to many SLs in the literature (see pp. 149-150). Coordinators, however, had no formal authority; they were entirely reliant on senior managers and, indirectly on the IB organization, to call teachers into account. MYP coordinators also had much larger responsibilities than those of SLs in facilitating an entire school improvement programme's implementation. I observe, nevertheless, that the coordinators I interviewed appeared to be active agents

more than intermediary tools for senior managers and neo-liberal demands, as many SLs were typically depicted. Fortunately, the coordinator's role, as it was framed in the school settings I studied, certainly suited the profile of the coordinators I interviewed. These coordinators expressed a commitment to the MYP philosophy and an enthusiasm for the opportunity for innovation. I have made the point earlier (see p. 148) that this match between role and profile appears to be largely a self-selecting one.

A second, obvious difference between coordinators in this enquiry and SLs as encountered in my literature review, relates to the prominent goal in school improvement efforts of interdisciplinary collaboration. It is quite evident that the framing of the role of MYP coordinator provided better opportunity for promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and a more holistic school focus than that of SL, whose interest was vested in pre-existing disciplinary structures. Some have proposed replacing the subject-based organization of schools with a trans-disciplinary framework (e.g., Hargreaves, 1997). Some have proposed at least abolishing the role of SL as primary middle manager, in order to overcome subject-based fragmentation and resistance to such collaboratively-based change (e.g., Hannay and Ross, 1999). I suggest the middle school model of core teachers teaching multiple subjects as a worthy option to consider in MYP high schools. I remind the reader that such proposals are based on a major assumption: interdisciplinary learning and cross-curricular collaboration are inherently worthwhile goals. According to my study, there was an appreciation for the value of both subject-based and interdisciplinary work. The former was considered much more practical. The latter produced mixed results, at best. Certainly the ambitious aim of implementing this cross-breed curriculum, linking middle and high schools, makes MYP coordination a difficult enterprise involving much 'messy' negotiation and delicate compromise. I find it confounding that, as well as interviewees appeared to mitigate these organizational dilemmas, there was a noticeable lack of explicit guidance from MYP guides or its PD workshops in terms of such pedagogical leadership and change management. As for the difficult interdisciplinary work, I suggest that a recent MYP publication (Boix-Mansilla, 2010) may provide more detailed, thus helpful, guidance than currently has existed.

A third difference between the context of my study and that encountered in much of the middle management literature pertains to the primary organizational dilemma of this enquiry: balancing accountability and PD elements. I conclude that in comparison to the predominant neo-liberal approach found in many national settings, the MYP places more

emphasis on the element of PD. The MYP appeared to promote opportunities for schools' improvement and professional development in partnership with the IB organization, other MYP schools, and their practitioners. This approach, in turn, contributed to an evolving curriculum framework. This model depended on practitioners', particularly coordinators', creative professionalism. Whatever limitations this 'work in progress' presented, they seemed to be more than compensated by the many leadership opportunities this model provided to the coordinators I interviewed. These coordinators led their school's PD and often also took on leadership responsibilities with the organization.

This enquiry prompts interesting questions: will this conceptualization of creative professionalism and evolutionary partnership remain and become enshrined as fundamental principles of the MYP? Or were these simply opportune values at this particular stage of this nascent programme's development? While there was mainly congruence between interviewees' experiences and MYP literature in this domain of accountability and PD, there was little explicit emphasis on the principles of creative professionalism and collaborative partnership in either the guides or PD trainings. Perhaps, as the organization continues its rapid expansion, it will seek greater quality control according to a more neo-liberal form of managerial accountability. Certainly the IB has identified the improvement of its quality assurance mechanisms as a major strategic goal. The current IB leadership has also articulated an organizational priority of enhancing service and performance management (Beard, 2006). Whether such plans cast either educators or students and parents as clients, the above-noted principles and its emphasis on curriculum as process may be compromised. A more business-like relationship and more prescribed, quantifiable product, however, might be appreciated by many educators, particularly subject teachers, based on my findings. It appears to be highly engaged coordinators, such as those whom I interviewed, who have prospered most with the MYP's open-ended, evolutionary framework. The DP, a much more prescribed, neo-liberal-oriented product, is certainly more financially viable for the organization than the MYP (IBO, 2004) and arguably more popular with practitioners and other school constituents.

On the other hand, another of the IB's major strategic goals is to widen access to its programmes, particularly for national public schools (IBO, 2004). In my study, I discovered that variation in school settings can only be accommodated by a flexible

curricular framework. Indeed, I wonder, on the basis of my findings, if the ambitious aims and the resource support required to implement the MYP make it an unrealistic fit for many national public, especially high, schools. Regardless, I suggest that the IB must manage this organizational dilemma carefully, in seeking to balance the desire for quality control and access with its inherent need for flexibility.

I suggest that this enquiry has provided a rigorous analysis of one middle management role, MYP coordination, through a set of thorough interviews and case studies, by considering a number of key contextual factors. This enquiry was based on the principle, which Spillane amongst others advocates, that leadership is an organizational quality and often described as taking a distributed (see Spillane et al., 2004 on p. 30) or a shared (see pp. 51-52) form. As Morley and Hosking (2003) argue, *“talk about people and talk about contexts cannot be separated...people create contexts and contexts create people”* (p. 43). I therefore studied coordination in the context of the MYP curricular framework, its implementation, the school settings, and coordinators’ interaction with teachers and senior managers. The consideration of structural and cultural dimensions has provided a helpful lens for understanding the challenges for middle managers and their agency. Much of the literature I reviewed highlighted the importance of middle managers influencing culture for effective school improvement. Coordinators’ efforts to change norms of practice were based on their credibility with colleagues. I showed in my analysis of data, however, that structures of school setting, such as material and human resources, have a significant impact on the efficacy of coordinators seeking to influence culture. In the case of the national public school, structural barriers limited significantly the agency of the coordinators. Additionally, subject-based structures of high schools have been proven, within the scope of this study, to be substantial barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration, and inextricably linked to the formation of cultural norms rooted in autonomous professionalism. Coordinators’ agency, then, involves seeking ways to overcome such barriers, taking advantage of structural opportunities, and creating new structures.

This structural focus within my enquiry has not overshadowed the cultural dimension, including political, social, and affective elements. Rather this focus has underscored these elements’ distinct value. I concluded that, without many formal powers to direct such ventures, the coordinators implicitly accounted for the important emotional aspects to a change process and employed their powers of persuasion. Coordinators did so,

foremost, by cultivating trust and establishing their credibility as both guide alongside and facilitator. In this way coordinators gained other agents' support. Coordinators gained teachers' willingness to develop curriculum collaboratively. Coordinators also gained senior managers' access to structural resources and their authority. While structure provided the context and, to a large extent, the range of possibilities for the implementation of change, culture was a second essential dimension. Coordinators' agency depended on how well they could work within, and sometimes shape, the two in interaction.

Bennett et al. (2007)'s model of creative social agency, in drawing upon Archer's structure-agency dualism (1995), provides a helpful theoretical explanation for why the IB's principles of creative professionalism and collaborative partnership are so ambitious, challenging, and, ultimately, enriching for most I interviewed. Bennett et al. portray a process of collaborative interaction or constructive discourse, involving explicit discussion of expectation and belief, even if causing conflict. According to this model, new knowledge cannot just be imposed in a prescriptive way. There must be an interactive process of creation. The authors claim that the push to change creates uncertainty and, if too great, fear and resistance.⁴⁴ This push, however, does have much potential to trigger creativity. If structures change, and 'knowledge and capable actors' are challenged to change, their articulated and tacit knowledge (i.e., cultural norms) must be examined, and then recreated through individual and collective action (i.e., agency). These changes, in turn, influence structures (Bennet et al., 2007: 465). If, however, there are competing understandings of structure, between middle and senior managers, teachers will retreat to the norms they know. There must be, therefore, a process of interaction – negotiation and in many cases 'disputation' (Morley et al., 2003: 45). A more open debate about expectations should reduce the lack of agreement between the different groups and between perceptions and reality. In the end, actions must be defensible to "*appropriate reference groups*" (Bennet et al., 2007: 466). If actions can be justified to colleagues in legitimate structural relationship, this will give rise to agency which in turn recreates structure – as a continuing cyclical loop.

The MYP, as I have described it in this enquiry, is based, at least to some extent, upon such a generative and iterative process of knowledge creation and adaptation. The

⁴⁴ See also Ogawa and Bossert's 1997 study.

underlying premise is that an externally-designed framework may initiate this process but that expertise resides with schools, coordinators, and teachers as professionals. This premise, however, sometimes appeared daunting to interviewees. The initial vulnerability, in many of the cases I studied, eventually led to more interdependence between colleagues. Both effective senior managers and the IB seemed to have provided the 'gentle nudge', ensuring educators held themselves accountable to explicit professional standards and practices. The IB organization and MYP coordinators both appeared to act as credible facilitators of constructive discourse and eventually a network of professional exchange. For those involved in this study, this relationship with the IB was rooted in shared values and good faith. This partnership rewarded practitioners with further professional opportunities. This open-ended process initially elicited fear and stress for some; however, it eventually became an empowering one.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have summarized the main findings of my empirical study according to themes – school setting, implementation, accountability and professional development, and coordination – and the related research questions and emergent sub-themes. I have also considered the wider implications of these findings in relation to my review of literature and examination of MYP guides, and the related contexts of middle management and IB. I will now proceed to the concluding chapter of this enquiry, in which I distil key findings and reflect on this enquiry's value and implications.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

In this chapter, I conclude this enquiry with a summary of its findings, and a reflection on its value and implications.

I consider that this study has achieved its aim of analysing the role of Middle Years Programme (MYP) coordinator in implementing the MYP in a variety of school settings and produced five key findings.

1. A primary aim of MYP coordination, according to both MYP literature and interviewees' reported practice, is facilitating links between subjects, between middle and high schools, and with the two other International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, Primary Years and Diploma. This aim was viewed by coordinators as compelling though ambitious.
2. Schools' pre-existing organizational, resource, and external accountability settings often presented coordinators, particularly in national public schools, with difficulties, primarily logistical.
3. The subject-based structure of respondents' high schools provided avenues for disciplinary implementation but also presented structural and cultural barriers to collaborative interdisciplinary planning.
4. Coordinators typically had much responsibility with little formal authority. They sought therefore to overcome above barriers through key functions, termed 'guide alongside', 'facilitator', and 'professional developer'. These functions were effective in developing trust and credibility with teachers, fostering constructive discourse, and enlisting the authority and structural support of senior managers.
5. MYP's approaches to accountability and professional development were viewed as complementary and constructive. The MYP emphasized collaborative partnership with participating schools in the evolutionary development of its curriculum framework. Accordingly, coordinators demonstrated 'creative professionalism' with this nascent programme, taking leadership opportunities within their schools and for the IB organization. These approaches differ from many depictions in middle management literature, in which subject leaders

struggle with conflicting, externally-imposed, responsibilities for collaborative school improvement and teacher evaluation.

In offering such insights into a particular experience of middle management - that of coordinating MYP implementation, this study not only makes an original contribution but also sheds light on the nature of middle management. The study is certainly robust in its thorough examination of perceptions of a number of highly engaged coordinators and school case studies. Thus, this study has widespread applicability. One significant implication *for middle management research* is the importance of school setting for understanding structural and cultural barriers to curriculum implementation. In addition, this study suggests that, *for education, particularly IB, policy and programme development*, greater attention to 'collaborative partnership' as a means for school improvement be given. Finally, *for practice*, this study underlines the value of 'creative professional' development opportunities for middle managers, whatever the setting.

I certainly learned much from this study, by examining and articulating core MYP principles, strengths, and challenges of implementation; as well as functions of coordination in its relation to school setting, senior management, and teaching faculty. Through the process of research and reporting I could not help but to reflect on my own experiences as coordinator. As I am both an MYP researcher and practitioner, this enquiry is my contribution to the on-going constructive discourse within the IB community, as well as the field of middle management literature about school improvement and the role, responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities of middle managers.

With the dearth of IB, particularly MYP, research, I hope further studies will follow. A large scale survey of MYP coordinators on a core issue, e.g., professional development or key functions; a comparative study of the three IB programme coordination roles; or an analysis of MYP implementation from the perspectives of teachers or senior managers – are examples of likely valuable additions to the discussion I initiated as well as potentially helpful sources of information for the IB. Indeed, I hope that this study could be a basis for related 'knowledge for action' projects, particularly in collaboration with the IB organization.

This study has sought to take a thorough, critical, but fair examination of this programme and these coordinators. As ambitious and difficult as the MYP is to implement, I submit, it offers a very special, worthy model of curriculum, school improvement, and leadership, which has attracted those I interviewed and distinguishes the programme in today's neo-liberal dominated landscape. As much as the MYP could benefit from further study and possibly improvement, this young though rapidly growing programme's underlying principles and inherent strengths as well as weaknesses as I have elucidated them deserve more explicit acknowledgement and attention by the IB and in the field of education literature.

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Appendix A: Original (Pilot) Interview Schedule

Formative path

1. Reflecting on your formative years as a child or adolescent, what influences do you view as most salient in the way you approach your professional work?
2. Could you describe any influential teachers?
3. Why did you get into education and not something else?
4. How did you spend time as a child? What would a person have seen if they shadowed you for a day when you were a child?
5. Do you remember the first time you thought of yourself as a teacher/ an educator?
6. What attracted you initially to this area of work?
7. What was your path to teaching?
8. What was your path to IB and MYP?
9. What was your path to MYP coordination?

MYP Coordination

10. Describe yourself as a learner, teacher, leader or manager (do you have a preference)?
11. What is your leadership approach or style?
12. What are the key influences on the MYP coordinator role?
13. What are your main activities in this role? Day-to-day, month-to-month, year-to-year?

Difficulty

14. Which aspects of the role are particularly challenging? In which aspects of the role do coordinators have the most needs?
15. What are the reasons that make it difficult for you to achieve your goals?
16. Can you describe a difficult situation as MYP coordinator? What happened? How did you respond? Why? In hindsight, would you have handled it differently?
17. Have you made any mistakes along the way? Did you feel like you have learned from your mistakes? If so, what?

Support

18. Who or what has helped you most as coordinator? (Whether in your school, through the IB or more generally)
19. What is unique about the IB? What is attractive about the IB to you?
20. Are innovation and creativity rewarded?
21. What aspects of the role are particularly gratifying?
22. What do collaborative teaching, learning, planning, and professional development look like? To what extent do these elements take place in your environment?

Accountability

23. What is the nature of accountability related to your role? What are the accountability pressures?
24. What are the bases of authority of your role?
25. In your work, to what or to whom do you feel responsible or loyal?

PD

26. Tell me about your PD experiences with MYP? (both as leader and participant)
27. What are your main PD needs?
28. What are your main PD benefits?

Change

29. What changes have you seen from IB in its MYP programme? What do you think have been the impact?
30. How have you changed as a result?
31. How do you work differently from when you started?
32. What, if anything, would you change about the MYP?

Appendix B: Revised Interview Schedule

Opener

1. How (and why) did you get involved in the IB/ MYP/ Coordination?

Implementation

2. How (and why) was the decision made to implement MYP?
3. What were the first steps in terms of consideration and implementation?
4. What do you see as the key elements of MYP implementation?
 - What roles have areas of interaction, interdisciplinary collaboration played?
5. What opportunities and challenges has MYP implementation presented?
 - How do you and your staff compare the MYP to the DP and/or the PYP as a programme?

School Setting

6. How is the MYP organized in your school?
 - What are the key organizational leadership roles for MYP implementation?
 - To what extent are resource needs addressed?

Coordination

7. What do you typically do day-to-day and/or month-to-month at your school?
8. With whom do you interact most?
 - Describe the interaction you have with others involved in MYP-related leadership. What about senior management? Subject leaders? Area of interaction (or grade) leaders?
9. What do you feel are the most important responsibilities, roles, and/or approaches relating to coordination for you?
10. What do you feel are important traits for MYP coordinators to possess?

Accountability

11. Other than the IB, to whom are you (externally) accountable for your curriculum?
12. What is the effect of this?
13. Describe your experience of MYP accountability measures thus far (in terms of meeting prescribed expectations/ standards and practices, and your authorization and/or evaluation experience(s)). Are they perceived to be helpful (by you/ teachers/ senior management)?
14. To what extent is moderation a positive element of MYP?

PD

15. Describe your school's experience of MYP PD thus far:
 - In general
 - Workshops
 - Consultant
 - Other (OCC, MYP sub-regional associations, networks, etc.)
16. What are the strengths?
17. What are the areas for improvement?
18. What has been the school's approach to MYP PD?
19. What has been your involvement in MYP PD (And other staff members' involvement with the MYP leadership)?
 - In your school
 - With the IB organization (if applicable)
20. What has been its impact?

Extension Questions:

21. How would you compare your school's setting, organization and overall experience of MYP implementation to other MYP schools you know (e.g., National Public vs. National Private vs. International Private)?
22. How do you see MYP moving forward?
 - In your school
 - As a programme/ organization

Appendix C: Interview Transcript Excerpt

Key for Colour Coding of Interviewees' Responses According to Research Themes:

Black = Interviewer

Green = Implementation

Blue = Coordination

Red = School Setting

How and why was MYP chosen?

It's really a grass-roots programme. We already had the Diploma Programme.

Parents liked the rigour, critical thinking and what was happening in the classroom.

Do parents value external accountability?

I don't know. You'd have to ask admissions or others in the administration.

Why do you think parents choose MYP schools, for example, in the States?

I guess it's the prestige. 'My kid's smart', so they want them to go there.

But that's not the point. You really need to understand the philosophy.

The premise of MYP is that it's for all kids.

So it's not just a measurable credential that sets them apart...

Yea, but they're willing to change. I saw that with school at a recent workshop in Utah.

Now that they understand, the only resistance now is with the gifted (programme) coordinator.

So the gifted/accelerated label is the carrot that gets them in and then...

How significant was the change process with the MYP?

It was a nightmare for subject specialists.

What was the first stage of MYP implementation like?

I began in 2000 as coordinator. In 2002 implementation began formally.

In the first stage we read what was required and did it. I was organized, but we weren't necessarily looking at the philosophy. I guess it was a pretty good start. But were we really doing it? Not really. We needed to take it to another level with more PD.

What's been your leadership approach?

In the first stage I was a driver. I was very literal and would execute. Then I became more reflective. Eventually I used more persuasion, diplomacy. Really the driver should be someone else...like the principal.

In looking back, has the MYP changed things for the better?

Yes, embracing the MYP philosophy is good for all. Though bureaucracy stands in the way sometimes. Teachers can't shut their door and teach the way they have the last ten years.

What role has collaborative planning played?

It's been huge with MYP. It's changed everything. When we did the self-evaluation recently, I had one teacher say: "now I know what's going on in other subjects. Now I want to know. I care." I find it really exciting.

The MYP definitely challenges specialists to think beyond their territory and look at the whole child. But some were resistant, especially with the areas of interactions. Many of the high school teachers preferred to focus on disciplinary-based Diploma preparations exclusively. As much as the interdisciplinary work was a worthwhile goal, it was challenging to provide the structure, the guidance.

If the MYP were more prescriptive like the Diploma, would the collaboration be lost?

If the MYP were more prescriptive like the Diploma, would the collaboration be lost?

Yes – but it's a catch-22. And that's the frustrating part of this programme.

Can you tell me more about your work on the areas of interaction?

One of the mistakes I like to tell at my workshop participants is how we killed AOI, absolutely killed it, and had mutiny on our hands. Our first cohort, when you mention them, they'd go ballistic. The first day I went into a music class and told them about the AOI connections. They were not able to get onto actual music instruments.

We also made them reflect too much. Now we do it in very many different ways. I tell teachers: 'teach it, don't preach it. It may be new to you, but not to the students. Ask students what areas of interaction connect'.

So were AOI transformative for your programme?

For some but not for the majority.

Why?

Because of a lack of comfort, thinking they're doing it wrong.

And so we're trying to convince them that there is no right way – try it and see if it works.

Just to get them thinking but they need experience and PD.